WORLD SOCCER

The *INTERNATIONAL* Magazine

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ALEX CROPLEY Arsenal

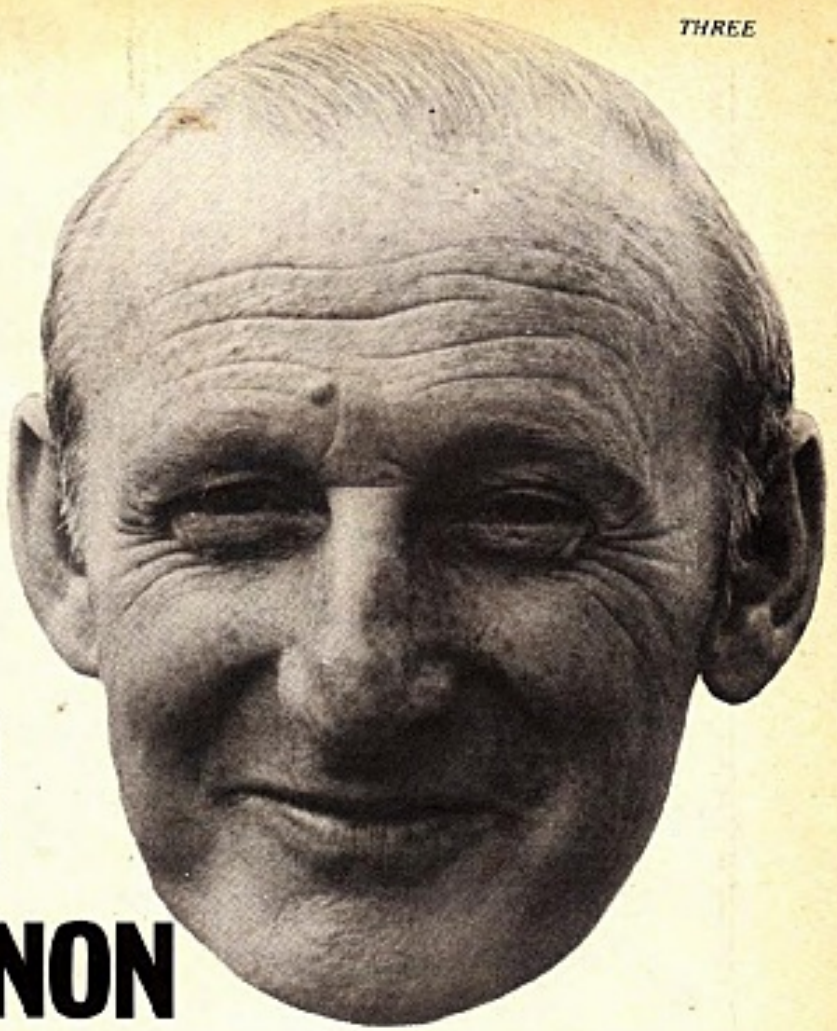
World SOCCER

Bertie Mee

Manager of ARSENAL

in an exclusive interview with

LESLIE VERNON



WHEN I was a lad, no higher than a corner flag and just as slim, a Hungarian journalist, Laszlo Feleki left our native land and undertook the hazardous journey to visit England. His task was to spend a week with the most famous club in the world, Arsenal. Spy on their training methods, and study the ingredients of the newly introduced WM-formation.

Discerning readers must know that I am talking about the thirties, when under the leadership of manager Herbert Chapman, the Gunners became a club to be respected and feared throughout the land. Feleki was a great propagandist for the English game, and since our childhood memories stay with us for the rest of our lives, I and my generation have always looked upon Arsenal as the personification of British football.

They were regarded as not just a club, but more like an institution, a bastion of sportsmanship, endeavour and excellence. I must confess that these highfalutin ideas received some knocks from time to time, but unquestionably, in the eyes of the world at large, Arsenal remained the best known English club.

Recent triumphs by such comparative newcomers as Leeds and Manchester United are looked upon as temporary, but Arsenal's prominence is constant. Although one is acutely conscious of this mythical conception, one has to approach the club and its current problems in a realistic fashion.

Never mind the marble halls adorned by the imposing statue of Mr. Chapman, the elegant offices, the air of affluence. What happens in the less sweet smelling dressing rooms, and out on the pitch is much more important.

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Results are of paramount importance...

In any case, too much has been made of Arsenal's long distant past, the pressures it puts upon their current staff, etc. When I visited Highbury recently to talk to manager Bertie Mee, it was obvious that he and his staff were more interested in the future, rather than dwelling on a tradition which has always been in my opinion, more of a plus factor than a hindrance.

Manager Bertie Mee is a likeable, sincere man. Patently in love with the game, patently honest, refreshingly outspoken. An intellectual and a deep thinker in a world inhabited by monosyllabic robot men. He was never an outstanding player, and came into football as a physiotherapist.

His playing career as a promising little outside-left (Oh! happy days!) was interrupted by the war, and after six and a half years of active service, at the age of 27, a back injury forced him into retirement. He joined Arsenal as physio in 1960, and took over from Billy Wright as manager in 1966.

"How would you sum-up your ten-years' stint as Arsenal's manager?"

"I am the club's longest serving manager since the war, and it has been an exciting period in the club's life. When I took over, we had to do some chopping and changing.

Several players left and others joined the club. During the late sixties, we reached the League Cup Final twice, but lost to Leeds and Swindon respectively. Our first major success was in the Fairs Cup, then, of course, we did the "Double".

In other words, we won the League and the FA Cup in the same season. In the following year we lost to Leeds 1-0 in the FA Cup Final. So, I took the team into five finals — won two of them. Won the League and once finished runners-up.

Statistics

These are of course bare statistics. Let's talk about the more important aspects of my job. In my view, a manager must have the ability to get eleven players to perform to the maximum of their ability. Call it motivation, organisation, chemistry of personalities or whatever else. I feel that I have achieved my objective.

First, I had to re-establish Arsenal as a major force in domestic and international football — we did it! I know that we were criticised quite severely during our "double" year, because our football didn't reach the heights of aesthetic beauty.

But football is like that in this country! Results are of paramount importance, you have to make the best with the material you have got. My own philosophy has changed during the last few years. Now I can understand our critics. I am also looking for a more positive style, more entertainment for the fans, and I have great hopes that our present crop of excellent youngsters will provide —in time—this hitherto missing factor."

As Bertie was speaking I noticed a picture on the wall, depicting Frank McLintock and Charlie George holding up the FA Cup during their "lap of honour" at Wembley. Both players have left the club since. In fact, the double team have almost been disbanded. Mee says:

"The chemistry was just right during the early seventies — in the dressing room and on the pitch! They had tremendous character, tremendous morale. They had respect for each other. That is what every pro-footballer must strive for — to earn the respect of his fellow professionals.

Charlie George failed to do that. There was never any question about his ability as a player, but his attitude was wrong. That is why he has never played more than 20 games per season.

Frank's value and contribution to the club has been immense. But I told him — as I tell every player on our books — that I cannot always guarantee him a first-team place. At the same time, he had an offer from Q.P.R. he couldn't refuse. We let him go — it was an emotional decision.

Urgency

Unfortunately, the "double" team had lost its urgency and competitiveness, some of them became mercenary. Now we are re-building, our aim is to develop players who can play in any part of the field. Transfer fees are going down, and I expect them to fall further in view of the 'freedom of contract' situation.

In the old days, I could go out and buy players for six figure fees, knowing that if they didn't click, I could get my money back (Marinello, Roberts). This is no longer true, and we must be very cautious in our transfer moves."

"Do the players have too much power?"

"Yes. During the last few years, the balance was quite wrong. The tail was wagging the dog. They made impossible financial demands, and their attitude wasn't in the best interests of the game. But they are becoming more reasonable, there is general improvement in every walk of life.

I often talk to school-masters, and they tell me that the students are more disciplined." (Mee emphasized that he was speaking generally and wasn't only referring to the Arsenal squad.)

"Do you think that the present set-up within the club is right?"

"It suits me perfectly. I am the manager with overall responsibility, and have three full-time coaches working with me. Bobby Campbell has complete autonomy with the first team, but of course, we discuss tactics, team selection etc.

Four of us, me and the coaches, meet every morning at 9.30 for a short conference, to deal with day-to-day matters. I want them all to be involved and be aware of their involvements. I know that I am judged by the media and the public by the results of the first team, but the other teams are just as important for the future of the club.

Occasions

I often talk to the players at our training ground. These are what I call "pitch-consultations". If they want to talk to me concerning a problem or a request, they come to see me in this office or, on occasions, I might ask them to come and talk to me.

I have dealt with various groups of people all my life, and I must say, handling footballers is the most difficult job I know. That's why some managers would like to see matters like contracts, bonuses, etc., handled by the club's secretary. I prefer to deal with these things personally, but it is vital that a manager should be able to delegate."

"Would you like to see changes in the administration of the game in this country?"

"This is a subject I could talk about for hours. The situation in this country is chaotic, absurd. Firstly, we shouldn't have two authorities running football. Infighting between the FA and the Football League can only do harm.

Do you know that there are 90 FA Councillors? 75 per cent of them are over 80 years old! The whole system needs a complete overhaul.

Third and Fourth Division clubs must go part-time, the lower divisions must be regionalised, a pyramid system should be introduced with automatic promotion for non-league clubs. But above all, a reorganisation at the top!

Liam Brady of Arsenal.

Manuals

Alan Hardaker said recently, that all coaching manuals should be burned, and then we would all be better off. Well, all I can say is that if our administrators would run the game on club level, football would be dead within six months — judging them on their track record."

"Do we overcoach our players?"

"Not at all. The trouble is that we are very short on talent at the moment. Players with little natural ability need coaching to bring out the most in them, and they have to be organised and tactically aware of every situation.

The better the player, the less coaching he needs. My player "Chippy" Brady, doesn't need much advice — just give him the ball, and he'll do the rest instinctively."

"What are the reasons for England's recent failures?"

"Shortage of world-class talent. Individually, we do not have good enough players. I can't see it getting any better either. The material coming forward these days is very poor.

All managers deplore the standard coming in from the schools. Sociologists say that this is due to the affluent society — boys don't have to kick a ball around, there are other forms of amusement within easy reach.

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BERTIE MEE

continued from previous page

We had Barcelona and Feyenoord here for testimonials. Technically, they were far superior, and it was an education to play against them. But we matched them in other aspects of the game.

Aggression in the penalty boxes — defensively and in attack — enthusiasm and endeavour. British players might not be as gifted as their Continental colleagues, but we breed born winners and our attitude is right.

That is why I can see many foreign clubs signing English players in the near future. Hundreds of pro-footballers will get free transfers next summer — most of them will find employment abroad."

Citizen

"How about foreigners coming here?"

"If I saw, let's say, a young Dutch boy ,I liked, I would sign him and would be willing to have a test case in court. There is no way the League can stop us employing a Common Market citizen.

But I wouldn't do the same for a Neeskens or a Muller. The formalities might take six months or more, and it just wouldn't be worth the money. Foreigners will come into English football, but they will not change its essential character. This is another subject we could talk about for hours."

As I was leaving, Bertie Mee said: "I know that I am not liked by the Press, because I won't talk to them after matches. What's the point? I could have 20 cards printed with the usual cliches on them, and pull the appropriate one out after a game. "I am sick." "We gave a bad goal away." "We worked very hard," etc. But I am always available on the 'phone, and if it's not some manufactured "story" they are after, I will talk to anyone. As for you, please come back any time and we'll discuss some of the questions you posed in more detail." I might just take up the offer . . . In the meantime, good luck, Bertie! May the next decade be just as successful as the first. Stay happy as the manager of a famed football institution, called Arsenal.

MacDonald— an enigma!

by Peter Bills

THE INTRICACIES and problems which accompany the job of manager to the England football team are both numerous and varied. Sir Alf Ramsey, even in his moment of supreme triumph in England in 1966, had problems and decisions which needed careful and lengthy considerations.

Don Revie is now the man in charge, with the none too easy task of adapting his years of managerial experience at club level to use in the quite different world of international football. It's a transition which Revie has found a challenge — and one which he has faced diligently in the last year.

Revie's problems are perhaps of a greater variety than any other European national manager. The European Championship fiasco and the consequent negotiations which produced a saner policy for the future, required both diplomacy and tact in rather greater quantities than any footballing knowledge.

But now that the League authorities have recognised the need for greater co-operation and preparation, Revie has to find the answer to several problems more concerned with the game itself. Several questions remain unanswered despite the fact that the first World Cup qualifying match is now less than six months away.

Characters

Revie has to decide whether he can commit his World Cup plan to the hitherto enigmatic characters who could, on their day, probably rival the playing skills of almost anyone in the world. Can the brilliance of men like Bowles, Hudson and George be relied on in the steamy, explosive cauldron of a South American World Cup tie?

Other questions, of course, remain. And one of them is currently providing Revie with perhaps his toughest decision since he started his planning for the Euro Nations Trophy in 1976 and the World Cup in 1978.

The mystery Revie has to unravel concerns the enigma that is Newcastle United's Malcolm MacDonald. "Supermac," as he is known, and worshipped on "Geordieland," has set Revie a problem which will require all the skill and experience of the former Leeds supremo to answer. For the question facing Revie is whether to discount, finally, the explosive flair which MacDonald can produce at club level — or to stand by the man who, two years ago, looked like providing the answer to all England's problems in front of goal.

The inability of MacDonald to produce his form at international level, is something MacDonald can't throw much light on. I remember an ecstatic MacDonald, broad grin across his face, striding confidently into the Wembley Stadium dining hall one night last April; five goals under his belt after England's 5-0 victory against Cyprus. At last, it seemed, the strength and finishing power of the Newcastle man had been shown at its best in an England jersey.

But once the excitement and seemingly endless interviews had finished, MacDonald returned to his hitherto depressingly passive form in the England shirt against first Czechoslovakia and then Portugal. Gone was the fire and thrust in front of goal — once more we saw the hesitant frustrated man who merely masqueraded as the confident, successful "Supermac".

The mystery remains. A spell of more than 10 matches this season in which he failed to find the net even in his more familiar and usually more successful Newcastle shirt, did little to encourage those seeking assurances about his England place.

Strangely, Supermac was suddenly unable to put his fierce and fast feet where his traditionally loosely-stitched mouth had stood.

MacDonald's failure, however, has not proved of such mystique and intrigue to one man as it has to most others. And maybe that particular character is better qualified to discuss and explain than others — if for no other reason, than he lives and works in much the same framework as the man MacDonald.

Manchester United's talented young striker Stuart Pearson sat in the lounge of a London hotel one evening last November — just two days after the dismay of England's European Nations Cup performance in Lisbon. Pearson, who came close to winning his first cap in the match, had probably reflected that he was fortunate to avoid a debut in such circumstances. He had sat on the bench and watched a poor England side struggle to find sufficient form to beat the mediocre Portuguese.

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THE CHANGIN OF FOOTBAL

THE YEAR is still young, and by the time it ends, the face of football is likely to have changed considerably. The severe economic crisis, freedom of contract, the effects of the Treaty of Rome, the growth of the game in the United States, the possibility that the Italian borders may open again after a decade; all these may have their effect.

What is perfectly clear is that the game in Britain cannot possibly go on as it has. Absurd mistakes are coming home inexorably to roost; notably that of de-zoning the Third and Fourth Divisions in the 1950s, when it was already perfectly plain that support for football was falling away, thanks to a combination of social circumstances; the growth of television, the coming of the so-called Affluent Society, the increasing power of wives in the working-class home, the much enlarged ownership of motor cars.

Football had been the poor man's sport between the wars; with the emphasis both on the noun and the adjective. What woman in her senses would want to stand out in the pouring rain in conditions not fit for a pig? It was quite inevitable that once women had any say in the matter, football, with what one might call its pig-pen stadiums, would be the sufferers.

'The present proliferation of leagues in England, now that shamateur football has been made honest, is absurd . . .'

Zoning

For years I have said that cutting down the League is no answer in itself, that in fact it would be sensible policy to enlarge the League, on the Italian pattern, zoning all football below the Second Division, and incorporating a huge multiplicity of clubs, all of whom, as they used to say about Tommy Atkins, had a field marshal's baton in their knapsack, in the shape of possible promotion to the First Division.

Nor, on the basis of the Italian experience, can this be said to be merely a pious fraud. Clubs such as Ascoli, Ternana, Cesena, even Cagliari, have fought their way up from the lower depths. The present proliferation of leagues in England, especially now that shamateur football has been made honest, is absurd. We have the Southern League, the Isthmian, the Athenian, and God knows how many others in the Midlands and North, all quite meaningless and, so to speak, hermetically isolated. Year after year the League clubs get together, vote in the lame ducks and vote out the livelier aspirants; though goodness knows there are few enough of those now.

Voting should have nothing to do with it. There should, as in Italy, be a phalanx of regionalised divisions from which clubs, notionally at least, could make their way up the scale.

As things stand, only a pitiful minority of clubs can hope to flourish under present circumstances. There is no sense weeping and wailing for the past; it is sentimental and mistaken self indulgence.

Colin Todd of England and Derby County.

Football clubs are not in any sense charitable institutions, they have no divine right to exist, nor do they, at the professional level, in any true sense represent the area where they are found.

If I thought that sturdy local youth were being denied an outlet for their energies and talents by the collapse of, say, an Accrington, a Workington, even, save the mark, an Orient, I would be greatly distressed. But professional footballers are, with all deference, mere mercenaries, and few indeed are those among them who build primarily on native talent.

Flourished

There is a useful analogy, though one must not take it too far, with the cinema. When, for a few decades, the cinema was king, movie theatres proliferated. Then television spread and flourished, and cinemas closed down in droves. Well, the professional football clubs have had a long, distinguished day, but now the demand, for varying reasons, has decreased, and many of them must go to the wall.

Why, after all, *should* a man, or woman, support his, or her, local club? If they live in Doncaster and shun Belle Vue for the more sophisticated football of Elland Road, some miles farther North, that is their right and privilege.

In a pre-televisual era, the smaller clubs would doubtless have benefited from such an economic slump as we are having today; the recession was, after all,

GING FACE ALL . . . as portrayed by BRIAN GLANVILLE

a major factor in the success of professional soccer before the war. But television is cheap, television is domestic, television can be watched in the warm. Why go out, either by crowded public transport on in a car you won't be able to park, to watch in conditions which can still be abominable?

Freedom of contract is seen by many clubs and their administration as the last straw, but I feel they may be exaggerating. What, in effect, is going to happen? Are we really going to see a General Post at the end of every season, an absolute erosion of club loyalty, a necessary fiction to keep the game going (half sport, half business)? Will it be impossible to keep a good player for more than a season or two? Will youth schemes be abandoned, as Milan threatened to abandon theirs when the Italian Players' Union were first agitating for freedom of contract?

The first point I would like to make is that in France at least, where the *contrat à temps*, as it is called, was first implemented, movement has been greatly restricted. The deplorable Bosquier-Carnus affair, when both Saint Etienne players signed for the rival club Marseille secretly before the Championship season was over, has not been repeated.

Rumoured

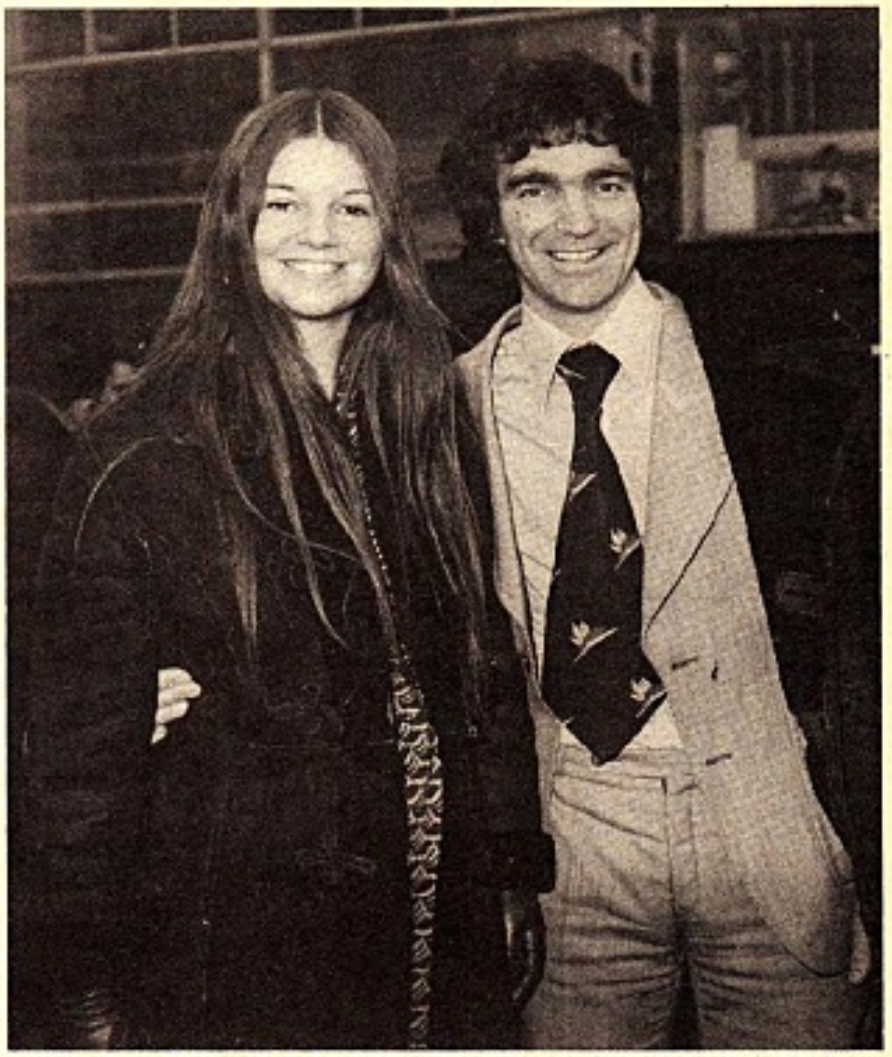
Most clubs which sign players put them on a contract of about three years; some are very much longer. There is absolutely nothing for a club to insist that a player sign for as many as ten years; which was rumoured to be the length of time for which Derby County tied up Leighton James.

The Cruyffs, of whom in any case there are exceedingly few, may insist on signing for a few years at the most; but let me remind you that Barcelona have had not one but THREE years out of Cruyff, and that they have got their money back on him several times over. Even today, when contracts run so much longer, a fact ensured by the iniquitous option clause which the PFA should never have allowed, there is really no keeping a star who truly wants to get away.

Look, again, at the case of Leighton James, who simply and, in my view, depressingly, made it perfectly clear on the football field that he was not interested in playing for Burnley, and was duly, consequently transferred.

Besides, the immense majority of players will be *glad* to sign a long term contract, knowing that this guarantees them security in the case of injury or loss of form. The situation, as things stand, is that many Football League clubs have been much embarrassed by the fact that well known players on longish contracts at high wages have lost form, aren't good enough to hold a first team place, and cannot command a decent sum in the transfer market. The only alternative is a free transfer; very nice indeed for the player concerned, who can pocket a useful sum, in one way or another, for changing clubs.

It will be easy enough to introduce such legislation as will protect youth schemes. Apprentice pros who stayed with their clubs might be required to sign a minimum three year contract; which would be protection for them, as well.



Peter Anderson leaves England to play for Antwerp. With him is his girl friend Colette O'Donnell.

Where dangers to the English may exist is . . . abroad. The transfer at a mere £80,000 or so of Peter Anderson from Luton to Antwerp was a substantial and alarming portent. If the Italian borders open in the summer, I can imagine British players and clubs falling over themselves to make deals.

Do not forget that a relatively undistinguished player such as Savoldi cost nearly one and a half million pounds to Naples in cash and kind, last year. What would a player like Duncan McKenzie or Colin Todd fetch? And what will happen as the game grows and gains popularity in the States, as I believe it will? Interesting, if scarcely easy, times lie ahead.

HOW TO REB ENGLAN

MOST PEOPLE appear to believe that England's recent lack of success in international competitions stems from their inability to take their chances. This was a myth first put into circulation during the Ramsey period and it still persists. It persists I believe because it is nicer to think that this is the only thing that is wrong — rather than face what I believe to be the truth: England do not know how to play together.

England do not know how to attack a re-inforced defence.

ENGLAND DO NOT CREATE CHANCES

The first two points are perhaps of aesthetic value but they also lead directly to my third point. Without a common sense of understanding about the principles of play, without thinking about the game in the same terms or being accustomed to playing a similar style at club level, the individuals come together quite rarely and cannot really be expected to change their natural way of playing and blend together.

With regard to the chances allegedly missed. I have always been of the opinion that high crosses (at best) create only half chances, while many people prefer to think that every ball placed in the air somewhere near the head of a player like Macdonald or Keegan should be regularly put into the net.

The ideal national side can really only come from a country where every team plays the same kind of football or at least, the clubs from whom the national team players come, play the same kind of football. This is why the great Hungarian team of the 1950's stands out as the best national side I ever saw — the Hungarian FA was in a position to transfer key players so that they all finished up with either Honvod or Voros Loboga (Red Banner) and were also able to dictate how these two club teams should be coached and play.

Thus when the best individuals of these two sides were brought together and permitted to play for a number of games, they quite quickly developed an understanding and produced good football and good results. The longer they went on playing together the better they get, the quality of their approach play improved enormously and because they had amongst them several quite brilliant individual attacking players they soon had a very fine team.

In England, neither Revie, the FA, the Football League or anyone else is in a position to instruct clubs in how they should play. The result is that among 22 First Division clubs we have about 18 basically different styles of play. Perhaps most important of all — and tragically from my view — many clubs put their hopes on scoring goals on the high cross so that no matter how many short passes may precede it, the final pass, intended to bring a goal is the high cross.

This has been clear to me for years and it has not been lost on the foreigners either. Belgium and Holland, West Germany and Bulgaria, all know why they have been beaten by England in the past: their defenders and their goalkeepers have not been able to deal with England's high crosses. True it has taken perhaps 50 high crosses to produce two goals but that has been enough.

The foreigners, recognising their weakness have gone home and practised. The fact is that continental defenders now are better than they ever were before in dealing with the high cross — and this has helped bring about England's poor results abroad.

Compromise

Now, if we are going to create an England team that will be more successful we must get away from the long ball and hope idea. We must find teams who do at least try to build attacks and create REAL CHANCES and choose their players to the exclusion of all others. We must limit the choice of England players to two or three clubs who basically play to the same ideas.

The way in which I would rebuild the England team would be to do what the Russians have done and name one club to represent England. My club would be either Leeds, Derby, West Ham or QPR but of these, only West Ham could field an all English team and they have so many problems amongst their front three at the moment that I reject that thought immediately.

Pearson sat back in a deeply cushioned chair and said: "It doesn't altogether surprise me Malcolm can do it in the League but not at international level. He is having a hard time at the moment but who really expects him to play well when the England team is having a bad time.

"I felt very sorry for Malcolm when we played that match in Portugal. Their defence played the offside all the time and we should have had someone coming through from midfield to counter their offside tactics. It is terribly frustrating when that happens and you are caught all the time. So I could understand what Malcolm felt like.

"I can understand Malcolm not producing it in internationals. It's completely different playing in a side you've hardly played in. If you don't play with someone for a month, it's obviously going to be a lot different to playing with ten other lads every week of your life. In your club, you get an understanding.

● continued from page 10

"Malcolm has done it all and scored so many goals the ability is there — everyone knows that. So I think Mr Revie will persevere with him because he has got the ability."

Maybe. Maybe not. But Mr Revie's problem has no easy solution. Possibly the emergence of Charlie George and Stan Bowles as talented, exciting and skilled players could solve the problem for some people. But against the cynical, ruthless Italians' defence whom England have to find a way past on the road to Argentina, who would back such men to survive the inevitable physical pounding? MacDonald might.

Can Bowles and George and their like provide as much a potential threat in the air as the fiercely competitive MacDonald? Hardly. Can Revie continue to back a reputation and potential? Doubtful. No easy question to answer for the England manager.

Revie's worries extend beyond finding the right men and the right combination as England begin their World Cup qualifying campaign. The right players require the right blend and Revie is more conscious than most that his England sides in Czechoslovakia and, to a greater extent, Portgual, lacked cohesion and understanding.

The possible seven-day preparation which Revie has hammered out with the Football League to enable his players to approach internationals properly, with certainly help. But not until Revie has got the right players and the right combination in his own mind will he feel he can start working on specific matches.

While England still experiment, time moves closer to the vital World Cup ties. Time, in fact, is really no longer on the England manager's side as he looks for the men to earn England a trip to South America in 1978.

EBUILD THE AND TEAM

as seen through the eyes of ERIC BATTY

Leeds I will not consider, partly because they have so many non-English players and partly because although they can play good football now, I have not forgiven them (and never will) for the way they played when they first gained promotion to division 1. Even now, I would not have in my team players like Hunter and Bremner at any price.

So we are forced to compromise and my solution would be to take the best that can be found from Derby, West Ham and QPR.

First let us take the midfield which is the key to everything that is good in football. Derby here have two Scotsmen and a purely destructive player; QPR have Francis and Masson but I would prefer if anyone is fit to take the West Ham middle line: Bonds, Brooking and Paddon, providing Bonds is fit. Why Brooking in preference to Francis? Simply because Brooking has the spark of individual genius that is vital at real top class. The only reservation I have about him is his inconsisteney but I have not seen another English attacking midfield player to equal him at his best.

Being a great believer in keeping international teams together I would give my choice at least six games together before making any changes. After that, if Brooking failed to produce consistent form I'd have to think again but what I am after initially is a common understanding that will enable the players to play together and play attractive, attacking football.

For the back four I would limit myself entirely to West Ham and Derby and do so with the greatest confidence for each individual player nominated as my kind of player, with the possible exception of McFarland who can be a bit naughty at times. A few words with him, emphasising that this will not be tolerated should be enough however. So the back four: McDowell, McFarland, Todd, Lampard.

The goalkeeper is in a different position to outfield players — and therefore I would stick at least for the moment to Ray Clemence of Liverpool.

Real problem

Now we come to the real problem. West Ham have nothing to offer up front; QPR have Givens, an Irishman — but they also have Bowles and Thomas while Derby have Lee, George, Davies and Hector.

This would be the area in which I would experiment most and where most of the problems would lie but I would make my choice and stay with it for six matches. My selection would be Lee, Bowles and Thomas. It is true that Thomas doesn't score too many goals, though I have noticed he is having more digs at goal this season. But I should emphasise that I would expect goals to come from my midfield trio and also from the full backs — while Todd would positively be encouraged to go forward *a la Beckenbauer* whenever he saw the opportunity.

Should players be unfit or otherwise unavailable in the early games players also in my squad would be Nish (Derby), Lock and Taylor (West Ham), Francis (QPR) and George, Davies and Hector (Derby).

The ideal time to take over would be at the end of the season playing the same team: Clemence; McDowell, Lampard; Bonds, McFarland, Todd; Lee, Brooking, Bowles, Paddon, Thomas in all three home internationals. That would be the first three games and then I would want to take the *entire squad* away for three to four weeks to a place abroad where they would train and play against EASY OPPOSITION.

This would enable the players to iron out any little wrinkles, to get to understand each others quirks without being under any pressure. An ideal place would be Canada, the USA or perhaps somewhere in Africa or Australia. Wherever the team went on tour, the travelling would be kept to a minimum to allow maximum time for training and playing in a relaxed atmosphere.

Breaking up for summer holidays the players would have begun to believe in themselves, individually and collectively . . . with plenty of encouragement from me. They should now be ready to take on stiffer opposition.

As early as possible in the new season I would like a Wembley game (the FA would need money to recoup the costs of the summer tour) and the opposition should ideally be provided by a middle class team that I would expect to beat at Wembley. Maybe East Germany would be a good choice.

This must now be followed by a series of games in which the emphasis would be to give the players experience playing abroad under strange conditions, against a hostile crowd and with a referee who would be expected to favour the home side. Away games against for example Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Perhaps the FA would now demand more Wembley games but no matter, the foundations would have been laid by this time but I would hope that now the opposition would be stiffer. Say Russia (Dynamo Kiev), Italy and perhaps Spain.

This should take us to the end of the season, a full year completed and in my opinion, England would be ready to take on anyone at home or away IN EUROPE. Assuming we have qualified for the World Cup and it is going to be played in Argentina I would want to visit that country in the year prior to the finals (wherever it was) playing their national team twice at different venues. While there I would also like to play matches against the host nation's top club teams . . . as many as time and the willingness of the clubs would permit.

I have gone into such detail because I am convinced that the FA must draw up their international fixture list not only to get money from big Wembley crowds but also to fit in with the requirements of the national team manager.

Now who will argue against the programme outlined above? Fans of players with other clubs who think their favourites should be in? The newspaper critics?

The Football Association or the Football league — who may not be inclined to give me the time or money I would need to prepare the team properly? Maybe, and if they were adamant and the restrictions they imposed seriously undermined my plans, THEN I WOULD RESIGN.

But take note and be warned. The national team managers of Czechoslovakia, Russia and Brazil do get co-operation from their FA and clubs. They are given every chance to prepare their teams properly . . . and as the team manager wishes.

If England do not base their selection on a club or clubs that play a game that is at least roughly comparable with continental football they will blunder on as they have in the past. Typical English league football does not and will not pay against top class international opposition. Liverpool might murder Cyprus at Anfield; Manchester United might beat Austria, even in Vienna but if we want to take on Brazil of 1970 and win in Mexico; if we want to beat Holland as they were in 1974 . . . if we want, as I would like, to match the Hungarians of the 1950's then England must play continental-type football which means men with skill and intelligence who can play 'together'. And they must be properly prepared and given adequate time.

ARTHUR ROTMIL reviews the 1975/7

Eight cou are repre

THE UEFA CUP, which was founded under the name of Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, has retained some of its characteristics which make this tournament still different to the other two major contests. This, incidentally, is the oldest of the three European club competitions, for the first tie took place on June 4, 1955, well before the Champions Cup was inaugurated in the autumn of that year.

Although the European Football Union has now been in charge of its organisation for over four years, some of the rules remained unaltered. Firstly, the number of participants is, at 64, exactly double the total allowed in either the Champions or Cup Winners Cup. This means, of course, an extra round to be played before the quarter-final stage.

Secondly, although UEFA now insist that clubs are entered in order of finishing in the League championship table, some national Football Federations do not always nominate all their leading clubs. England leave one place open for the League Cup winners, like Scotland have done in the past, while West Germany, for instance, allow the beaten cup finalist to participate in the UEFA Cup!

Thirdly, there remains the vastly disproportionate representation. England, West Germany and Italy are the only countries permitted the maximum of four teams, which gives them a rather unfair numerical advantage over nations like Holland, for example, who are allowed just two clubs. And there are indeed several countries with merely one representative. And lastly, the UEFA Cup still stages its final on a home-and-away basis, while there is only one single match to determine the winner in the other two tournaments.

Despite the method of seeding followed by UEFA for some years now, to prevent the strongest teams from meeting too soon, the First Round of the current series brought together several highly favoured sides. In Britain great interest was aroused by the encounter between Liverpool and Hibernian. After a 0-1 defeat in Edinburgh, the Merseysiders won the return by 3-1, thanks to a brilliant hat-trick from their Welsh international John Toshack.

But Liverpool's local rivals, Everton, did not survive their similarly outstanding clash with AC Milan. The Italian club, old campaigners in Europe, were at the time, torn by internal strife. One of their most famous players and team captain, Gianni Rivera, was engaged in a battle for power with the Milanese president, Albino Butticchi, so it was really a wonder that the team (minus Rivera), struggling as they were, overcame Everton, after a goalless draw at Goodison, by 1-0.

Disaster struck also the English League Cup winners and newly promoted

Steve Heighway (left) of Liverpool beats Terry Naylor of Tottenham.

6 UEFA Cup competition

ntries esented

Kevin Keegan of England and Liverpool.

Aston Villa on their début in Europe. The Midlanders were slammed in Antwerp by 4-1 and even lost the home leg 0-1, to go out. But a much better performance was put up by Ipswich, who eliminated former European Cup winners Feyenoord Rotterdam, having won both legs 2-0 and 2-1.

By contrast with England's 50 per cent loss, all four German teams sailed into the next round. The German Cup finalists MSV Duisburg had an easy task against the Cypriots from Paralimni, winning by 10-3 overall; Hertha Berlin had few problems with HJK Helsinki (6-2 aggregate), while Hamburger SV, held to a goalless away draw by Young Boys in Bern, duly won the home tie 4-2.

Only Cologne made it hard for themselves against the modest Danish amateurs from BK 1903 Copenhagen, eventually getting through in extra time. The Germans had in fact lost their 2-0 advantage from the home leg, after 90 minutes, but a hat-trick in extra time (!) by the 22-year-old reserve striker Matthias Brücken saved the day for the Rhinelanders.

Of the four Italian clubs, apart from AC Milan, the two Roman teams Lazio and AS Roma got through. Lazio were extremely fortunate against the Russians from Tcherno Morec (Odessa); when trailing on aggregate 0-1, they were awarded a penalty — in the last minute of the home match to square matters and won in extra time 3-0! Roma dismissed the brave challenge of the Bulgarians Dunav Russe, albeit only by 2-1 overall. Thus, the only Italian "fallers" were Napoli, who crashed to Torpedo in Moscow by 4-1 and could only draw 1-1 in the return.

Of the other fancied teams Barcelona, Ajax Amsterdam, Red Star Belgrade and Sporting Lisbon all entered the next stage.

In ROUND TWO a third English entrant disappeared in dramatic circumstances. After winning comfortably at home by 3-0, against Bruges, nothing it seemed could stop Ipswich, but the Belgians had other ideas and their 4-0 triumph in the return must rank as one of the finest performances in this season's competition. Liverpool saved England's face by eliminating a surprisingly feeble Real Sociedad (San Sebastian) of Spain, on the crushing aggregate of 9-1.

In this round the last Scottish contender, Dundee United, bowed out to Porto (2-3 overall), whilst the Germans suffered their first casualties. MSV Duisburg could only beat Levski/Spartak by 3-2 and went out on away goals, after losing 1-2 in Sofia. Hertha's 1-0 advantage over Ajax Amsterdam was not enough — the Berliners going down in Holland by 1-4.

And Cologne too, not only failed to pull back a 0-2 deficit from Spartak Moscow, but lost also at home 0-1. Only Hamburger SV lived up to expectations with a fine 5-1 overall victory over Red Star Belgrade. Mixed fortunes too, for the Italians who lost Lazio, first giving a walk-over (due to fear of political demonstrations against the Spaniards, following the executions of Basque nationalists by the Franco regime) and then losing 0-4 in Barcelona.

But Roma made amends by beating Sweden's Oester Vaxjo (2-1 aggregate), and so did AC Milan, who were obviously holding back in the first leg (0-0) against the Irish part-timers of Athlone Town. The reason: The Italian club prepared the stage for the much heralded comeback of their "golden boy" Gianni Rivera, who having become president of the club, returned to active duty! Milan wanted a big crowd for the return with the Irish, which they got — 80,000 cheered Rivera and a 3-0 win!

The remaining qualifiers all hailed from Eastern Europe: Stal Mielec and Slask Wroclaw (both from Poland), Inter Bratislava (Czech.), Torpedo Moscow, Vasas Budapest and Dynamo Dresden.

ROUND THREE brought a big surprise when Levski/Spartak, having lost only by 1-2 away to Ajax, defeated the former European champions by the same score in Bulgaria and then put them out on penalties! Another fine display gave the Belgians from Bruges a double victory over the Italians AS Roma, each time by 1-0.

A tremendous tussle involved Dynamo Dresden and Torpedo Moscow, which the East Germans narrowly survived, for having won 3-0 they could afford a 1-3 defeat in the return. The Russians were already badly handicapped, both by the fact that their championship had already finished and they lacked match practice, and because of climatic conditions.

Thus, they were forced to play their home leg hundreds of miles away in the warmer South on the shores of the Black Sea. The same problems befell their compatriots from Spartak Moscow, who crashed to AC Milan by 0-4 at San Siro and although they managed a fine 2-0 win, also in the deep South, it was no more than a consolation.

Liverpool kept England's flag flying high, by beating the Polish side Slask Wroclaw, whose début in Europe ended on a disappointing 1-5 aggregate defeat. But the other Polish outfit, Stal Mielec, did better, getting through at the expense of the Czechs from Inter Bratislava.

The field of the remaining contestants was completed by two strongly favoured sides: Barcelona, looking much better than last season, beat Vasas Budapest by 4-1 overall, whilst Hamburger SV disposed of Porto by a 3-2 aggregate. The Germans could yet emerge as the "dark horses" of this competition, but on past form the winner should come from the trio of Barcelona, AC Milan and Liverpool.

The most interesting aspect: the eight qualifiers for the quarter-finals each represent a different country!

Next month
Special features on
LIVERPOOL
WEST HAM UNITED
DYNAMO DRESDEN
DEN HAAG
plus
Liverpool team
Photo...in colour

INTERNATIONAL

LOOKING BACK over 1975 in the international arena it hits me as being very much a year of mediocrity. Few people would argue that football is in the doldrums, falling gates and defensive tactics are undoubtedly coupled together but I just don't know who or what is going to break the deadlock. Thousands of people like me — for I am really only a football fan in a privileged position — will go a long way to see what looks like being a good game. But after so many disappointments — for example Belgium v. Holland and Holland v. Belgium in the 1974 World Cup qualifying games — it's no surprise that everyone is becoming more sceptical and staying away.

What promises to be an outstanding game will still bring in good crowds but the unfortunate fact has to be faced that so many attractive looking games at every level so often turn out to be disappointing.

During the year only two international sides remained unbeaten, Czechoslovakia and Spain. The Czechs success will no doubt come as a big surprise to the English who always under-rate foreign sides. I recall how they derided Poland after the Poles had eliminated them from the last World Cup and they are still unrepentant even though Poland went on to take third place in the World Cup. "Poland," say the majority of the English, "were lucky to beat England," and so it is now with the Czechs.

The Czechs themselves had no great confidence in their ability to beat England. Having done so, and with the possibility of improving their side still further if Antonin Panenka and Ladislav Petras recover from injuries and find their best form, this low overall state of the game makes everything possible. But the Czechs are rather like the Yugoslavs — likely to lose against the most ordinary team and unable to sustain themselves as consistently.

Spain are a different kettle of fish. Unbeaten, but team manager Ladislav Kubala had his head very close to the chopping block when both Scotland and Rumania got away with drawn games in Spain. Only qualification in the European championship saved him.

Among the sides who were beaten only once, several are worthy of a mention. Poland and England were eliminated from the European championship on those solitary defeats, Poland losing 0-3 away to Holland and England being beaten 1-2 in Bratislava by the Czechs. One defeat and out seems hard, particularly as the Poles went down only on goals difference.

Wales, who also were beaten only once, qualified, largely I believe because they were in an easier group and I have no doubt that England for example would have qualified for the next stage had their opponents been Hungary, Austria and Luxembourg. However, success comes to the little countries like Wales so rarely that I hope Welsh fans won't think I'm knocking them. They took their good fortune well and I wish them luck.

Romania, too, are worthy of a note having lost only once but statistics of 1 win 9 draws and 1 defeat is a record that suggests there is something wrong — perhaps in the way they play tactically? Stefan Kovacs, back from his stint with Ajax and the French national team, has taken over their team and has the chance to prove himself — which in my book he still has to do.

Looking at the table of percentage success, the thing that strikes me immediately is the fact that three of the top four and four of the top six are

England against West Germany at Wembley in March 1975 with Alan Ball attempting to evade the tackle of Herbert Wimmer.

L REVIEW 1975

ERIC BATTY presents his annual look at the year just past

	P	W	D	L	Goals F.	Goals A	Percentage Success
YUGOSLAVIA	6	5	0	1	12.	3	83.3
Poland	7	5	1	1	21.	7	78.5
Russia	7	5	1	1	13.	5	78.5
Italy	8	5	2	1	19.	5	75.0
Czechoslovakia	9	4	5	0	18.	5	72.2
ENGLAND	9	5	3	1	19.	7	72.2
East Germany	9	6	1	2	20.	9	72.2
Wales	6	3	2	1	10.	7	66.6
Scotland	10	4	5	1	15.	12	65.0
West Germany	7	3	3	1	11.	5	64.2
Sweden	7	4	1	2	13.	8	64.2
Spain	4	1	3	0	6.	4	62.5
Belgium	4	2	1	1	3.	2	62.5
Portugal	7	3	2	2	7.	8	57.1
Bulgaria	4	1	2	1	6.	2	50.0
Eire	4	2	0	2	7.	4	50.0
France	6	2	2	2	6.	4	50.0
Greece	6	2	2	2	10.	8	50.0
Northern Ireland	7	3	1	3	6.	6	50.0
Romania	11	1	9	1	19.	15	50.0
Hungary	7	2	2	3	14.	11	42.0
Austria	7	2	2	3	9.	8	42.0
Iceland	4	1	1	2	2.	5	37.5
Holland	7	2	1	4	9.	11	35.7
Turkey	7	1	3	3	5.	16	35.7
Malta	3	1	0	2	2.	9	33.3
Switzerland	7	1	2	4	6.	11	28.5
Denmark	5	1	0	4	4.	12	20.0
Finland	4	0	1	3	1.	7	12.5
Luxembourg	4	0	0	4	5.	19	0.0
Norway	5	0	0	5	3.	15	0.0
Cyprus	7	0	0	7	1.	18	0.0

from Eastern Europe. Does this mean that the days of capitalist football — big transfer fees, big salaries and bonuses — are over and the socialists are getting on top in big time football? The success of Dynamo Kiev, victors over Bayern Munchen for the Supercup and winners of the Cup Winners Cup, suggests this may be so, but I don't think the case is proved.

No one can deny that the transfer system as seen in England and Italy suggests there is something dramatically wrong. Neither can we say categorically that the premise of big bonuses will enable ordinary players to beat superior teams. All the figures indicate to me is that money isn't everything — and I knew that already.

Attacking

But there is little sign that the East Europeans are gaining their success with really positive attacking football. Wish that they were and could send a team to Wembley that would thrash England 7-1, every week for a year so that we finally learned our lesson. The same of course applies to Italy . . . in case anyone should think I'm knocking England again.

Unfortunately Dynamo Kiev beat Bayern (who are in decline) 1-0 and 2-0 and most of the time they play with only Blokhin and Onitchenko forward. Away to Switzerland they played very defensively and at the year's end there came another pointer.

Russia's only defeat was a 1-0 loss away to Turkey (an own goal) but just a few weeks later West Germany visited Turkey — and the Germans, too, have plenty of problems — and hammered the Turks 5-0; which also suggests that Dynamo Kiev, alias the Soviet Union's national team, have a long way to go.

As far as the overall figures are concerned it is difficult to quarrel with them in general terms. Seven of the eight qualifiers in the European championship are amongst the top 13 and some of those who failed narrowly (like England and East Germany) are up there too. I say seven out of eight assuming that West Germany don't lose at home to Malta!

Holland are the eighth qualifier, well down the list and the reason for their relatively low position is easily explained. It all revolves around Johan Cruyff. With Cruyff and Johan Neeskens at their best Holland are a very good side indeed. Without the Barcelona pair the Dutch have often struggled as they did when beaten 0-3 away in Yugoslavia. But even with Cruyff in their team they often fail to convince.

Merited

Cruyff at his best is clearly an outstanding player — amongst the best the world has ever seen. But he often plays only in flashes, brilliant flashes it is true, as in the 3-0 win over Poland and at other times is very disappointing, almost as if his mind were on other things that have nothing to do with football. Elsewhere there are points worth thinking about. Yugoslavia's top place is not entirely merited. I don't think they are the best in Europe. Yet I have been convinced for many years that the Yugoslavs are the Brazilians of Europe, able to produce gifted new players almost at the drop of a hat.

They seem to have done it again now after losing so many players to foreign clubs and to Army service during 1975. Clearly the Yugoslavs have a lot of talented players but having played only Holland (without Cruyff), Sweden, Norway and Northern Ireland and they have still to prove themselves — but don't be surprised if they do.

Russia still have to prove themselves in my opinion. I reserve judgement on them and Dynamo Kiev until I can see them in the flesh against top quality opposition, something I haven't yet been able to do.

East Germany seem to have lost their way somewhat though I have been enormously impressed by Joachim Streich and Hans-Jurgen Kreische but through injury or some quirk of the national coach Georg Buschner they have not always been in their side. Personally I believe that the DDR tried to follow England's style based on hard-

continued overleaf

INTERNATIONAL R

continued from previous page

men and work rate and have come a cropper.

Certainly they boobed badly when they could only draw at home to Iceland and were beaten by them away. They seem to have lost their way, though for their own good and that of the game generally I hope they will soon recover their senses and go for skill.

Poland are a different kettle of fish. They have problems now in defence and in midfield with the latter the big headache. Jerzy Gorgon's suspension from the national team didn't help of course but there's a hole in the middle of Kazimierz Gorski's defence that needs plugging quickly.

In midfeld there is no doubt that Kazimierz Deyna, a very gifted and intelligent player but always, I suspected, inclined to be chicken, appears to have "gone".

He publicly stated that he didn't want to play international football any more and no doubt he will now get his wish. The problem for the Poles is do they have a ready made replacement? Clearly Gorski has problems but unlike many English critics I was very, very impressed with the Poles in 1973 and 1974 and I sincerely hope they can rise again.

United States players in Poland looking at a poster advertising their full international in Warsaw.

England XI

As for England, they have a lot of good club players but few (if any) really top class international players. I say any because there was a time when I though Derby's Colin Todd was international class but he appears to have gone off the boil recently.

England's problems don't really show up at Wembley where most foreign teams are beaten before the kick off. They don't show up in the British Home Championship either, mostly because with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland selecting many players from English clubs, the manner in which these games are played is not strange to them. But transport an England XI to almost any country in the world and they shrink and pale into insignificance.

Men who play like heroes for their clubs just cannot produce their form at top level. Emlyn Hughes and Kevin Keegan of Liverpool are typical; each playing like two men for Liverpool but looking out of their depth away from the U.K. for England. Malcolm Macdonald is another typical example who got five at Wembley against little Cyprus, scores plenty for Newcastle but does nothing in the matches that really count.

Looking at the 1975 results England's best AWAY performances were a 2-1 win over Switzerland (placed 27th out of 32) and a 1-0 win over Cyprus whose figures speak for themselves.

The lesson is clear that there must be a fundamental difference between the kind of football played in the English First Division and that which is required for success at top level in the international arena.

My own view is that gifted players are very thinly spread in the major soccer playing countries *but it is there* and shows when the best come together in the national team. In England the truly gifted players do not exist, largely because of the way in which the English play — fight-ball as I have often called it rather than foot-ball. And the situation will not improve until the English clubs come to their senses and give talented youngsters (by the score) the chance to prove themselves with First Division clubs.

Distrust

At the moment the majority of managers would prefer a big hearted, hard working player who "gets stuck in" rather than a talented if slightly idle player who thinks more about attack and enjoys attacking.

Finally, let me give my ranking list for 1975 for the benefit of those, who, like me, distrust figures, particularly when everyone plays different opponents.

Super teams:
none

Useful:
Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Russia

Difficult to beat:
England, West Germany, Italy, Romania, Belgium, Scotland, Spain and Portugal

Temporarily in decline:
Poland, East Germany

Permanently in decline:
Austria

Improving:
Greece and Iceland

I also believe that Hungary will improve now that Lajos Baroti has taken over once more and as for Holland put them where you will. Personally, I wouldn't play Cruyff unless he gave me £10,000 cash ... which I could keep if he didn't play well.

AUSTRIA

A	Luxembourg	W	2-1
H	Hungary	D	0-0
H	Czechoslovakia	D	0-0
H	West Germany	L	1-2
A	Hungary	L	1-2
H	Luxembourg	W	6-2
A	Wales	L	0-1

P7 2-2-3 goals 9-8

BELGIUM

H	Holland	W	1-0
H	Iceland	W	1-0
H	East Germany	L	1-2
A	France	D	0-0

P4 2-1-1 goals 3-2

L REVIEW 1975

BULGARIA

A	East Germany	D	0-0
H	West Germany	D	1-1
H	Malta	W	5-0
A	West Germany	L	0-1

P4 1-2-1 goals 6-2

CYPRUS

A	Greece	L	1-2
A	England	L	0-5
A	Czechoslovakia	L	0-4
H	England	L	0-1
H	Portugal	L	0-2
H	Czechoslovakia	L	0-3
A	Portugal	L	0-1

P7 0-0-7 goals 1-18

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

H	Romania	D	1-1
H	Cyprus	W	4-0
H	Portugal	W	5-0
A	Austria	D	0-0
H	Switzerland	D	1-1
H	Hungary	D	1-1
H	England	W	2-1
A	Portugal	D	1-1
A	Cyprus	W	3-0

P9 4-5-0 goals 18-5

DENMARK

H	Romania	L	1-6
H	Finland	W	2-0
H	Scotland	L	0-1
A	Spain	L	0-2
A	Scotland	L	1-3

P5 1-0-4 goals 4-12

ENGLAND

H	West Germany	W	2-0
H	Cyprus	W	5-0
A	Cyprus	W	1-0
A	Northern Ireland	D	0-0
H	Wales	D	2-2
H	Scotland	W	5-1
A	Switzerland	W	2-1
A	Czechoslovakia	L	1-2
A	Portugal	D	1-1

P9 5-3-1 goals 19-7

EIRE

H	Switzerland	W	2-1
A	Russia	L	1-2
A	Switzerland	L	0-1
H	Turkey	W	4-0

P4 2-0-2 goals 7-4

FINLAND

H	Italy	L	0-1
A	Denmark	L	0-2
A	Holland	L	1-4
A	Italy	D	0-0

P4 0-1-3 goals 1-7

FRANCE

H	Hungary	W	2-0
H	Portugal	L	0-2
A	Iceland	D	0-0
H	Iceland	W	3-0
A	East Germany	L	1-2
H	Belgium	D	0-0

P6 2-2-2 goals 6-4

GERMANY, EAST

H	Bulgaria	D	0-0
H	Poland	L	1-2
A	Iceland	L	1-2
A	Canada	W	3-0
A	Canada	W	7-1
A	Mexico	W	3-2
A	Mexico	W	1-0
A	Belgium	W	2-1
H	France	W	2-1

P9 6-1-2 goals 20-9

GERMANY, WEST

A	England	L	0-2
A	Bulgaria	D	1-1
H	Holland	D	1-1
A	Austria	W	2-0
H	Greece	D	1-1
H	Bulgaria	W	1-0
A	Turkey	W	5-0

P7 3-3-1 goals 11-5

GREECE

A	Malta	L	0-2
H	Cyprus	W	2-1
H	Malta	W	4-0
H	Romania	D	1-1
A	West Germany	D	1-1
A	Italy	L	2-3

P6 2-2-2 goals 10-8

HOLLAND

A	Belgium	L	0-1
A	West Germany	D	1-1
A	Yugoslavia	L	0-3
H	Finland	W	4-1
A	Poland	L	1-4
H	Poland	W	3-0
A	Italy	L	0-1

P7 2-1-4 goals 9-11

HUNGARY

A	France	L	0-2
A	Austria	D	0-0
H	Wales	L	1-2
H	Austria	W	2-1
A	Poland	L	2-4
H	Luxembourg	W	8-1
A	Czechoslovakia	D	1-1

P7 2-2-3 goals 14-11

ICELAND

H	France	D	0-0
H	East Germany	W	2-1
A	France	L	0-3
A	Belgium	L	0-1

P4 1-1-2 goals 2-5

IRELAND, NORTH

H	Yugoslavia	W	1-0
H	England	D	0-0
A	Scotland	L	0-3
H	Wales	W	1-0
H	Sweden	L	1-2
H	Norway	W	3-0
A	Yugoslavia	L	0-1

P7 3-1-3 goals 6-6

ITALY

H	Norway	W	4-1
H	United States	W	10-0
H	Poland	D	0-0
A	Finland	W	1-0
A	Russia	L	0-1
H	Finland	D	0-0
H	Holland	W	1-0
H	Greece	W	3-2

P8 5-2-1 goals 19-4

LUXEMBOURG

H	Austria	L	1-2
H	Wales	L	1-3
A	Hungary	L	1-8
A	Austria	L	2-6

P4 0-0-4 goals 5-19

MALTA

H	Greece	W	2-0
A	Greece	L	0-4
A	Bulgaria	L	0-5

P3 1-0-2 goals 2-9

NORWAY

A	Italy	L	1-4
H	Yugoslavia	L	1-3
A	Sweden	L	1-3
H	Sweden	L	0-2
A	Northern Ireland	L	0-3

P5 0-0-5 goals 3-15

POLAND

H	United States	W	7-0
A	Italy	D	0-0
A	East Germany	W	2-1
A	United States	W	4-0
H	Holland	W	4-1
H	Hungary	W	4-2
A	Holland	L	0-3

P7 5-1-1 goals 21-7

PORTUGAL

A	France	W	2-0
A	Czechoslovakia	L	0-5
A	Scotland	L	0-1
A	Cyprus	W	2-0
H	Czechoslovakia	D	1-1
H	England	D	1-1
H	Cyprus	W	1-0

P7 3-2-2 goals 7-8

ROMANIA

A	Argentina	L	1-2
A	Turkey	D	1-1
A	Czechoslovakia	D	1-1
A	Spain	D	1-1
H	Denmark	W	6-1
H	Scotland	D	1-1
A	Greece	D	1-1
H	Turkey	D	2-2
H	Russia	D	2-2
H	Spain	D	2-2
A	Scotland	D	1-1

P11 1-9-1 goals 19-15

RUSSIA

H	Turkey	W	3-0
H	Eire	W	2-1
H	Italy	W	1-0
A	Switzerland	W	1-0
H	Switzerland	W	4-1
A	Turkey	L	0-1
A	Romania	D	2-2

P7 5-1-1 goals 13-5

SCOTLAND

A	Spain	D	1-1
A	Sweden	D	1-1
H	Portugal	W	1-0
A	Wales	D	2-2
H	Northern Ireland	W	3-0
A	England	L	1-5
A	Romania	D	1-1
A	Denmark	W	1-0
H	Denmark	W	3-1
H	Romania	D	1-1

P10 4-5-1 goals 15-12

SPAIN

H	Scotland	D	1-1
H	Romania	D	1-1
H	Denmark	W	2-0
A	Romania	D	2-2

P4 1-3-0 goals 6-4

SWEDEN

H	Scotland	D	1-1
H	Algeria	W	4-0
H	Yugoslavia	L	1-2
H	Norway	W	3-1
A	Northern Ireland	W	2-1
A	Norway	W	2-0
A	Yugoslavia	L	0-3

P7 4-1-2 goals 13-8

SWITZERLAND

H	Turkey	D	1-1
A	Eire	L	1-2
H	Eire	W	1-0
H	England	L	1-2
A	Czechoslovakia	D	1-1
H	Russia	L	0-1
A	Russia	L	1-4

P7 1-2-4 goals 6-11

ESTUDIANTES BACK IN FORM

WITH TWO matches to go in the Argentine national championship final round, Estudiantes de la Plata lead by one point from this season's Metropolitan First Division champions, River Plate—and they are doing it with the type of soccer which won them the Libertadores Cup three years running (1968, 69, 70). They are not as rough perhaps and quite as dirty-minded, but under coach Carlos Bilardo, who played as half in the infamous team, they use close marking, spoiling tactics, time wasting, tight defence and counter-attack.

They have gone through their first four final round games without conceeding a goal and hold a 6-1 goals record after five matches. They may be chiefly resonsible for the 3.3 goals per game average during the national championship dropping to just below three in the final round.

Estudiantes and River Plate are the only two clubs left with a title chance and they had yet to meet at press time ... and Estudiantes have already won three and drawn one of their four meetings with River Plate this season.

If Estudiantes win the title, they play Metropolitan champions River Plate again for the champions cup and both enter next season's Libertadores Cup. If River Plate takes the title, the champions cup will automatically go to them, while Estudiantes face Metropolitan First Division runner-up Hurican for the second place in the Libertadores Cup.

Pressure

Wisely the Argentine FA decided to limit the final round to eight clubs (as established before the championship) in spite of pressure from several big clubs who wanted it increased to 12. This left out Hurican, Independiente and possibly Boca Juniors. (The latter immediately sacked manager Rogelio Dominguez and replaced him with Juan Carlos Lorenzo who worked a miracle with promoted Union Santa Fe this season).

Independiente went on a lightning Central American tour in the week before their vital last match. It seemed a strange thing to do because, although even if they had won the last game they wouldn't have qualified, they didn't know that until the other results came in.

The eight-team final round had a real national look about it with three teams from the north, centre and south of Buenos Aires and one each from La Plata, Rosario, Tucuman, Jujuy and Cordoba ... and Temperley had qualified after being promoted and finishing bottom of the Metropolitan First Division this season. Last season Talleres Cordoba had been the first non-First Division team ever to make the final round. This year there were Gimnasia y Esgrima Jujuy and Atletico Tucuman apart from Talleres.

San Lorenzo's Hector Scotta continued on the goal trail and had totalled 57 this season at press time. On the way he beat Erico's 38-year-old record of 47 in a season (for Independiente), but in those days there was no national championship and only 34 First Division matches were played — 53 had been played by the time Scotta reached 48, which still made the legendary Paraguayan centre-forward easily top scorer in comparison.

Scorers

Scotta had scored eight in the first four final round games, then failed to find the net against Estudiantes when defending champions San Lorenzo lost 2-1 and with it went their chance of retaining the title. Following Scotta in the final round scorers table was River Plate's defender Pasarella with four penalties.

IN URUGUAY three defeats in a row for First Division champions, Peñarol, following their 37-game unbeaten run, resulted in coach Hugo Bagnulo (who coached Uruguay's last World Cup team) being changed for former Uruguayan World Cup star Juan Alberto Schiaffino.

But Peñarol's bad streak shouldn't have surprised anybody. Peñarol had by then played 58 matches during the year, including league, tour and Libertadores Cup games — roughly one game every two days. On top of that, nine of their players were picked for the national team which also had a busy year. The players were stale, but the coach took the rap, although there was a general feeling that his methods were old fashioned and a change would be for the good of the club.

Mar del Plata stadium shown to newsmen...

ARGENTINA'S WORLD CUP worries continue although they may only be minor at this stage. Newsmen were invited to Mar del Plata in December to inspect that city's World Cup preparations, but after the tours, the speeches, the demonstrations of plans and social functions, there is not much one can say.

The municipal sports centre, where a new soccer stadium will be built, does show signs of work being carried out there and plans will be completed in time, officials say, if the Social Welfare Ministry hands over the promised funds, but they were emphatic on one point: "Up to now we have not received a single cent, although the economy minister announced that the first part — some 10,000 pesos — had been handed over to the Ministry."

Mar del Plata officials also intend financing part of the new stadium by pulling down and selling the land where the local league's present stadium stands, but they are faced with legal action from big Buenos Aires club Boca Juniors who remodelled and enlarged this stadium at their own expense some years ago under the condition they could use it for international summer tournaments.

Apart from that, Mar del Plata — a holiday resort on the Atlantic Coast, some 400 kilometres from Buenos Aires has everything for the tourist and some more.

SOUTH AMERICAN ROUND-UP

by ERIC WEIL

Reguera and Frasoldatti of Estudiantes try to push Talleres goalkeeper Quiroga out of the way in the national championship final round match which Estudiantes won 2-0.

In spite of the change Peñarol still lost 2-1 against classic rivals Nacional who hadn't beaten them for six games. Nacional's leading scorer Revetria only got the winner a minute from the end, but they had earlier missed chances which should have given them a more comfortable win.

Peñarol's poor run enabled Nacional to win the title of the new Major league with two matches to go, but they lost the next match 3-1 to River Plate which stopped their unbeaten run at 16 — one short of equalling the club record.

This Major League championship is considered to be the youngest competition ever played according to ages of players taking part — virtually all home grown as money is short and even big clubs Nacional and Peñarol have had to let their expensive foreign stars go.

Racing is the youngest team with an average age of only 19.9, Wanderers the oldest at 24.6. The average age of champions Nacional is 22 and Peñarol's 23.8.

IN BRAZIL, Internacional of Porto Alegre won the Brazil Cup (national championship) with their stalwart Chilean defender Elias Figueroa fittingly scoring the goal which gave them a 1-0 victory over runners up Cruzeiro (Bello Horizonte) in the last match of the final round in which Fluminense (Rio de Janeiro) and Santa Cruz also took part.

Forty clubs participated in the Brazil Cup after qualifying from their state leagues and a total of 432 matches were played. Internacional and Cruzeiro thus qualified for the 1976 Libertadores Cup.

IN PARAGUAY, River Plate and Sportivo Luqueño tied for second place in the First Division.

They were due to play two matches to decide which enters the Libertadores Cup with champions Olimpia.

IN COLUMBIA, Independiente Santa Fe won the 'Finalizacion' championship while 'Abertura' champions Millionarios were second.

The six team final round between leading teams of both tournaments is now in progress with Millionarios and Deportivo Cali sharing the lead after three games.

IN BOLIVIA, the six team final round for the Bolivian title is in progress.

Last year's champions, The Strongest, were at the top, but at press time they threatened to withdraw over the sending off of several of their players. Other clubs in the final round, which qualifies the top two for the Libertadores Cup, were 31 de Octubre, Bolivar Independiente Unificada, Guabira and Oriente Petrolero.

IN CHILE, Union Española maintained a two point lead with five matches to go in the First Division.

IN VENEZUELA, Deportivo Galicia, winners of the Professional League, also headed the final round (in which the top four clubs participate) by three points with two matches to go.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK by KEIR RADNEDGE

REAL MADRID GO DOWN TO BARCELONA

BARCELONA WERE on the attack, referee Acebal Pezon was counting out the final seconds. Paco Fortes cut in from the wing and Marcial and Günter Netzer went for his pass.

Marcial won the tackle and shot, hard. Jose Camacho, in the six-yard box, put his head in the way and the ball soared out to where Carlos Rexach was waiting. No one could stop his drive — Barcelona had beaten Real Madrid 2-1 in Nou Camp, Madrid's first defeat of the season, and the championship struggle was on in earnest.

So no happy new year for Miljan Miljanic — only a one-point lead over Atletico Madrid, with Hercules hanging on a further point away on 20, and CFB climbing to fourth place on 19.

Neither team were at full strength. Indeed, Rexach only owed his place to a two-match suspension being served by young winger Miguel Mir, and it was another suspension — that of Enrique Costas — which brought Marcial back to first-team duty.

Madrid were without the injured Paul Breitner and also Roberto Martinez — tired and out of practice after a trip back to Argentina with Madrid's lawyer in an effort to sort out his naturalisation documents.

The other goals both came from dead ball situations. The first after a mere three minutes — Johan Neeskens heading in a Rexach corner. Madrid equalised in the 64th through Pirri after Vidente del Bosque headed on an Amancio free kick.

Miljanic didn't seem too upset afterwards. He was probably secretly pleased that the pressure of that unbeaten record had been lifted.

"Madrid know what it's all about, winning and losing games like this. We've been beaten when we thought we had a point, but football's like that. A just result? Well, the score stands and there's nothing we can do about it now.

"Barcelona dominated the first half and created more chances, but we hit back in the second and I thought we'd deserved the draw. Neesken's header was a good one, but I thought our marking was at fault.

"The fight for the title is going to be a tough one now . . ."

Hennes Weisweiler was happy enough, of course, pleased with the return to form of Rexach but still guardedly critical of Hugo Sotil, who led the attack.

"Sotil put a lot of effort into the game, but that's not enough — he should have had a couple of goals."

Meanwhile Atletico were moving ever closer with a 3-1 victory over Español in the day's other big match. Leivinha scored twice more to take his total to nine and go joint second to Gijon's Quini (11) in the scoring charts. Ruben Ayala scored the other Atletico goal with Brazilian import Jeremias getting the consolation. Carlos Caszely, now qualified for Español, had an anonymous time of it.

Still, he was no doubt just glad to be playing in the league at all, after six months in the wilderness waiting for his transfer from third division Levante to be ratified.

Action from the Madrid derby between Real and Atletico, which Atletico won 1-0. Pictured are Canacho, Leal and Capon.

The Chilean, having been in Spain two years, applied in the summer to take out dual nationality, and it was on the strict understanding that this would go through that Español bought him. Instead, Caszely's papers were held up in the corridors of power. No one would admit why, but it seems not unconnected with the fact that Caszely had been a strong supporter of the late Marxist president of Chile, Salvador Allende.

Finally he had to obtain from Santiago an affadavit stating that he was in no way *persona non grata* in Chile, before Spain would consent to his naturalisation.

Meanwhile there's been more furore over the Spaniard's-who-aren't. A whole stream have been taking out dual nationality just in case Real Sociedad and Athletic Bilbao make things much hotter — and this presented the astonishing case of one-time CFB halfback Bernardo Cos. He came to Spain as a Paraguayan, and turned out to be an Argentinian with a different name altogether!

Real Sociedad, with the bit between their teeth now, returned to the attack and called again for the suspension of Adorno, Anzarda, Becerra, Cos, Jacquet, Roberto, Ovejero, Valdez and Vilanova, and named nine more doubtful characters — Osario (Español), Oruezabal (Granada), Ruben Diaz (Atletico Madrid), Diarte (Zaragoza), and Montero, Cortes, Gonzalez and Gomez Voglino (all Elche).

Madrid, as I said, have been busy sorting out Roberto's documents, and at the same time have been involved in a scare that Miljanic was about to quit. These rumours followed hard on the World Cup pairing of Spain with Yugoslavia, and it was feared Miljanic was being pressed to go home to organise the new Iberia campaign. There was also the fact that moving to Madrid hasn't been all plain sailing for his family.

MM knocked these stories on the head pretty smartly for the time being, and anyway, he's got other things to worry about: like how to get Santillana (two goals so far) scoring again in the league.

●Continued on page 49

Report recommends radical changes . . .

by Colin McAlpin from Belfast

THE MOST dramatic and exciting thing to hit Irish League soccer for years is, beyond question, the 36-page Report on the Future of Soccer in Northern Ireland, issued after a year's deliberations by a 15-man committee nominated by the go-ahead Northern Ireland Professional Footballer's Association following a public meeting in early 1975 at which over 100 fans, players, club officials and press expressed their displeasure at the state of the game and their desire to see it revived and expanded.

The terms of reference given the committee — drawn from a wide cross-section of football — were "To study the existing structure of Association Football in Northern Ireland and to make recommendations for future development; to submit a report to the Irish Football Association and the Irish Football League, the governing bodies of the sport in the Province, with the sole aim of helping the legislative and administrative deliberations of our authorities as they direct the progress of the sport into the 1980's."

Statistics

From the outset the committee, of which I was a member representing the press, decided to break the Report into five sub-sections dealing with Administration and Finance; Competitions and Structure; Coaching and Development; Laws, Refereeing and Discipline and Public Relations and Supporters.

The statistics surrounding the compiling of the Report are, to say the least, formidable. The full committee met 11 times and the meetings lasted on average four hours, the sub-committees between them met on 35 occasions, overall the time spent was around 700 man hours. One sub-committee member, out of his own pocket, travelled to Stranraer FC to make comparisons in approaches to club management and other members travelled several times to Dublin for talks with John Jarman, the Republic of Ireland's Director of Coaching. Other members travelled throughout the Province to meet various supporters' clubs and still others undertook an extensive market research on aspects of the local game.

At a Press Conference to launch the Report chairman Derek Murray commented: "We do not say that everything which currently exists is bad; we have no magic wand; some of our thoughts are expensive and not all of them are new. But we genuinely formed the conclusions that unless there is regeneration the only prize is stagnation. We hope that it will be a useful contribution to the progress of the sport and that it will be given detailed consideration by the Irish FA and the Irish League."

What, then, does this formidable Report suggest for soccer in Northern Ireland. It would, obviously, take all of this month's issue to outline in detail the 54 recommendations but some of the major recommendations are worth close examination.

Interim

The major change called for is, certainly, the formation of a two division league. The suggestion is that the existing 12-team Irish League be increased immediately to 14 teams and a declaration of intent made that in five years' time the increase will be to 16 teams with the formation of a 16-team Second Division with two up-two down operating.

In the five interim years a careful monitoring of clubs who express a desire to get into this Second Division be made by the Irish League to ensure the grounds came up to a required standard.

The 32 Reserve teams would be formed into a zoned League and, if clubs could afford them, third teams formed into a new Youth League.

Several of the existing competitions — described in the Report as non-events and too long in duration — would be stopped and the reason re-structured.

The theme in this section of the Report is one of expansion of the game in Northern Ireland and the introduction, long-overdue, of excitement and novelty.

Another section criticises the insular outlook of some clubs and the often poor standard of men selected to sit on the higher councils of the game. Individual clubs are urged to ensure that the right men are picked to represent them.

One interesting suggestion is for a tenure of office — five years — for committee chairmen and for an expansion of full-time officials.

There is, too, the call for the appointment of a National Coach on a full-time basis and, something which will interest my colleague Brian Glanville, a fierce attack on cross-Channel clubs who operate what is virtually a white slave market in young boys, a system which is described in the Report as "morally improper".

Supporters, says the Report, are seldom used by parent clubs as much as they should be and the game does not sell itself as well as it should. There is a call for the appointment of a full-time Commercial Manager/Public Relations Officer.

Relaxation

There is, of course, much more besides: a review of players' status, the streamlining of Irish FA sub-committees, the setting-up of an Advisory Board consisting of club secretaries and/or managers Association and Football Writers' Association, better ground facilities, the limitation of the number of non-contract players by one club, a relaxation of the ban on domestic Sunday soccer, more dedication by senior players, use of football clubs as community centres, the building of a National Stadium, introduction of a caution points system, more liaison between parent clubs and supporters' clubs and the formation of a Northern Ireland Federation of Supporters' Clubs.

Discussion

The hope now is that an on-going discussion will take place and that the Irish FA and Irish League at least sit down and consider the Report . . . and, dare one hope further, act on it?

In future issues I'll keep you informed on reaction to this thoughtful document from the authorities. It should prove an interesting experience!!

COLIN JOSE reports from Car

Bicentenn will comm

Mike Channon of Southampton — an automatic choice for England.

IN THIS Bicentennial year in the United States the United States Soccer Federation in conjunction with the North American Soccer League has come up with a special international soccer tournament to help celebrate the event.

To be known as the American Bicentennial Soccer Cup the tournament will pit the national teams of England, Italy and Brazil against an all star team from the North American Soccer League that will be known as Team America but in fact might well be called — the Rest of the World.

Obviously the young United States national team is not as yet good enough to provide serious competition for the stronger soccer nations of the world and thus with so many talented players now being attracted to the United States these days the idea of playing the NASL All Star team against three of the most famous national teams in the world holds greater potential both in crowd size and in competitiveness.

As an indication of just what Team America might look like just take a look at last year's NASL All Star team. Goalkeeper: Peter Bonetti (St Louis Stars and England); Farrukh Quraishi (Tampa Bay), Mike England (Seattle and Wales), Werner Roth (New York and the US), Bob Smith (Philadelphia and the US); Midfielders: Arfon Griffiths (Seattle and Wales), Ron Sharp (Miami), Antonio Simoes (Boston and Portugal); Steve David (Miami and Trinidad), Pele (New York and Brazil) and Gordon Hill (Chicago).

Also playing in the league for a short time in 1975 were Eusebio and Giorgio Chinaglia and they may well return for 1976. Many other names are now being mentioned in connection with NASL clubs for 1976 and they include Rodney Marsh, Bobby Moore and Geoff Hurst. The idea of seeing Moore and Pele playing on the same team is something soccer fans will have dreamed of many times and this summer it may come true, and then there is always the possibility that they could be joined by George Best.

Sponsored

Certainly it will be interesting to see and of course on top of all the established stars many of the young American stars in the NASL will get their chance to be a part of the team as well.

The event is being sponsored by the United States Soccer Federation and President Gene Edwards reported that "all profits from the tournament will go to the development of the game in America, especially among its youth".

OLYMPIC STADIUM DOUBTS

THE CANADIAN province of Quebec, which took over control of construction for the 1976 Olympic Games to be held in Canada from the City of Montreal last November has now announced that there is only a 50-50 chance that the stadium will be ready in time.

Victor Goldbloom, provincial minister in charge of the Games, warned that contractors have no more than a "fighting chance" of building the Olympic Stadium by the June 6 target date. Goldbloom recently told newsmen that Quebec may ask the International Olympic Committee to postpone the Games for a few weeks.

A spokesman for the International Olympic Committee said that while a delay was "not totally impossible it would cause enormous difficulties at this late stage".

Whether or not the main stadium is ready in time for the games now hinges on three things, with the most unpredictable being the weather. If the Montreal winter becomes too severe certain phases of construction would be interrupted, while Quebec is still concerned that further work stoppages could occur at any time.

On top of this the current labour agreement with the construction unions is due to run out on April 30. It is estimated that work is currently one month behind schedule.

Recently reporters were allowed to tour the main stadium site for the first time in more than a year with Montreal mayor Jean Drapeau trying to keep the press in the dark until the government of Quebec took over and information became more readily available.

One of the major problems in rescheduling the games is that it would mean a terrible shuffle in hotel and travel reservations for everyone involved.

nada and the United States

ial tournament
ence in May...

In the competition each team will meet the other once and although no definite sites have been worked out New York, Philadelphia and Washington are expected to get at least one game with other cities under consideration. The games will be played between May 23 and May 31.

The last time that England actually played the United States in a full international was in New York on May 27, 1964, a game which England won 10-0 with Roger Hunt scoring four goals and Fred Pickering three. Prior to that England had beaten the US 6-3 in New York in 1953 and 8-1 in Los Angeles in 1959, a game in which Bobby Charlton scored a hat-trick. Before that of course came the famous occasion when the United States beat England 1-0 in Belo Horizonte in 1950.

Italy has played the United States twice in full internationals with the first being in the 1934 World Cup when in the first round the Italians beat the Americans 7-1 in Rome, the second was on April 4 last year when the Italians coasted to a 10-0 win in Rome with Francesco Graziani of Torino scoring three goals.

Famous

But we have to go back to 1930 for the first and only clash between Brazil and the United States apart from occasions such as the Pan American Games. This game was played as the US team was on its way home from the 1930 World Cup in Montevideo. After a brief stop in Santos where they played a 3-3 draw with the now world famous club team they lost against Brazil 4-3 in Rio de Janeiro.

It should be stressed however that it will not be the United States playing this summer but "Team America" but as NASL Commissioner Phil Woosnam put it: "The squad will be the best representative possible of professional soccer as now played in America." He indicated that it would likely be a blend of outstanding United States citizens and stars from overseas. Woosnam added that the selection process for determining Team America and the selection of a coach had not yet been worked out.

Canada will enter

IT NOW seems almost certain that Canada will have an entry in the 1978 World Cup. After several months of uncertainty due to serious financial problems, and after Canada had only entered tentatively, the Canadians would now seem all but certain to compete and not as at first suggested with an amateur team, but instead with a largely professional one.

The about face has been brought about as a result of the Canadian Soccer Association offering the operation and running of the national team to the country's two professional clubs in the North American Soccer League — the Toronto Metros-Croatia and the Vancouver Whitecaps. The Whitecaps with a largely Canadian team anyway took up the challenge and although it has not been officially finalised it now seems all but certain that the Whitecaps will represent Canada.

Although final details have yet to be worked out it would mean that the Whitecaps would be responsible for financing, team selection and coaching as well as finalising the dates for the games against the United States and Mexico. This will bring up a curious situation for the new coach of the Vancouver Whitecaps is none other than Eckhard Krautzun who almost one year ago resigned as coach of Canada's national teams. Now circumstances have placed him back in charge of the World Cup team.

Rumblings

Obviously this will not go down too well in some quarters and already there are rumblings from within Canada's various soccer associations. Undoubtedly however, with the nation deeply involved in preparations for the Olympic Games coaching two teams at once is not the ideal situation for current national team coach Colin Morris, whose major responsibility at the moment is the Olympic team.

Under normal circumstances I am not in favour of a club team representing a nation, but in this case given a choice between withdrawing, using the amateur team in the World Cup as well as the Olympics or using the Whitecaps as the national team I feel that the Canadian Soccer Association has made the right decision.

In any case the Whitecaps would form the nucleus of any Canadian World Cup team for the Metros-Croatia team is as its title suggests largely a Croatian team. Also Denny Veitch the General Manager of the Whitecaps has indicated that he will not rule out players other than Whitecaps who the coach feels can help strengthen the side. So if this is followed up then Canada will end up with its strongest team anyway.

During last year's NASL schedule the Whitecaps used 12 players who have represented Canada at international level at one time or another. They were goalkeepers Peter Greco and Greg Weber. Defenders: Bruce Twamley, Sam Lenarduzzi, Bobby Lenarduzzi, Neil Ellett, Bruce Wilson. Midfielder: Brian Gant and Forwards: Sergio Zanatta, Glen Johnson, Bruce Miller and Gary Thompson.

COPA LIBE

PAUL RADFORD traces the history of the South American Club Championship

INDEPENDIENTE'S FOURTH consecutive victory in the 1975 Copa Libertadores — the South American equivalent of the European Cup — has once again underlined Argentina's almost total dominance in the competition.

In the last twelve years Argentine clubs have taken the title no fewer than ten times (Independiente alone lifting the cup on six occasions) and finished as losing finalists in the other two years.

The record contrasts sharply with that of Brazil, regarded throughout the world as being South America's outstanding national side. At club level the Brazilians have been distinctly disappointing. Since Santos won the Libertadores in 1962 and 1963 only two Brazilian clubs, Palmeiras and Sao Paulo, have managed to reach the final — and both lost.

Brazil's alarming record — in terms of points won by clubs from each country the Brazilians are well behind Argentina and Uruguay and only fractionally ahead of Chile, Paraguay and Peru — has many causes.

Many people believe that the Brazilians have never really taken the Copa Libertadores seriously, although this is not really true. Santos certainly took it seriously in the early years, and though Brazilian interest declined in the mid-sixties when the competition was enlarged (Brazil even withdrew for one year in 1966), the clubs are now fully aware of the financial benefits to be gained from the competition.

The national outcry which went up when Cruzeiro failed to reach last year's final after seeming certain to do so shows that Brazilian fans are itching to see a club team dominate the South American scene as Santos used to do.

It could be that they will not have to wait too long for a run of successes in the Libertadores. Soccer at club level in Brazil is clearly of a higher general standard than elsewhere in South America, particularly now that many top Argentine and Uruguayan players have left their countries to play abroad.

Whereas Argentina has, perhaps, five or six good club sides and Uruguay one or two, Brazil can boast twenty to twenty-five. And this is the essence of the problem — the available talent is spread too thinly round the top clubs for a truly great side to emerge, much the same as in England.

The weakening of the opposition, though, gives Brazil its best opportunity yet to make a real breakthrough in the Copa Libertadores. Argentina's Independiente were a bit lucky to retain the title last year and are clearly over the top now. And one wonders how serious the Argentines are about the competition when qualifying teams are forced to play qualifying matches on Fridays between league games on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Uruguay can practically be discounted at the moment. Peñarol and Nacional have the best records in the competition, but this is mainly because they have taken part so regularly. Neither could be called a serious force in recent years.

Nevertheless, their records do bear examination. Peñarol, who have only missed one competition, have appeared in six finals, winning three. (Independiente, incidentally, have a better record having won all their six finals).

Bochini (10) of Independiente heads in front of Union goalkeeper Gatti in the Argentine national championship. The match ended 1-1 and Libertadores Cup holders Independiente failed to qualify for the final round.

ERTADORES

Nations' Table

1	Argentina (9)	289	159	59	71	487	276	377
2	Uruguay (3)	243	121	58	64	425	248	300
3	Brazil (10)	156	85	29	42	283	177	199
4	Chile (8)	216	77	44	95	334	361	198
5	Paraguay (4)	193	68	54	71	263	266	190
6	Peru (8)	195	62	54	79	241	282	178
7	Ecuador (9)	180	55	42	83	210	284	152
8	Colombia (8)	151	47	35	69	195	244	129
9	Bolivia (11)	153	33	35	85	162	338	101
10	Venezuela (7)	136	29	30	77	115	239	88

(Number in brackets represents number of clubs from each country to appear in the Copa Libertadores)

	Winners	Runners-up
1960	Peñarol (Uruguay)	Olimpia (Paraguay)
1961	Peñarol	Palmeiras (Brazil)
1962	Santos (Brazil)	Peñarol
1963	Santos	Boca Juniors (Argentina)
1964	Independiente (Argentina)	Nacional (Uruguay)
1965	Independiente	Peñarol
1966	Peñarol	River Plate (Argentina)
1967	Racing (Argentina)	Nacional
1968	Estudiantes (Argentina)	Palmeiras
1969	Estudiantes	Nacional
1970	Estudiantes	Peñarol
1971	Nacional	Estudiantes
1972	Independiente	Universitario (Peru)
1973	Independiente	Colo Colo (Chile)
1974	Independiente	Sao Paulo (Brazil)
1975	Independiente	Union Española (Chile)

Peñarol can also claim the biggest Libertadores victory — the 11-2 defeat of Venezuela's Valencia in 1970. Arch-rivals, Nacional, have appeared in four finals, winning once, and the two clubs have actually faced each other no fewer than 26 times in the tournament. For the record, Nacional have come off best with nine wins to Peñarol's seven and ten draws.

Only six clubs have ever won the Libertadores — Independiente (6), Estudiantes (3) and Racing (1) of Argentina, Peñarol (3) and Nacional (1) of Uruguay and Santos (2) of Brazil.

Though clubs from Paraguay, Peru and Chile have reached the final, the prospects of another country breaking into the Argentina-Uruguay-Brazil stronghold have looked slim until recently.

Paraguay's three top clubs, Olimpia, Cerro Porteno and Guarani, are all amazingly in the top ten in the Copa Libertadores records, but Paraguay, like Uruguay, is currently suffering from a drastic exodus of top players and clubs cannot compete at the highest level.

Peru is suffering from a financial crisis so the best hopes of a breakthrough rest with Chile where two clubs, Colo Colo and Union Espanola, have reached the final in the last three years.

Watch out also for Colombian clubs. They gave the Brazilians a fright last year and the national side has proved its class by finishing as runners-up in the South American Championship.

Celebrated clubs

Bolivia and Venezuela are too weak to consider and Ecuador, in spite of some good results in the past from Barcelona and Emelec, lack resources.

Seventy-seven clubs from the ten countries have appeared in the competition, yet some of the most celebrated clubs in the continent have never done so. They include Brazil's most popular club, Flamengo, and other top Brazilian clubs, Internacional and America (Minas Gerais). Chile's Magallanes, Peru's Municipal and Liverpool of Uruguay have never taken part either.

In the 1912 games played in the tournament to date, 5430 goals have been scored, an average of 2.83 per game.

COPA LIBERTADORES RECORD 1960-1975

1	Peñarol (Uruguay) (15)	130	66	30	34	228	135	162
2	Nacional (Uruguay) (11)	107	54	27	26	189	103	135
3	Universitario (Peru) (11)	91	35	24	32	123	119	94
4	Independiente (Argentina) (9)	67	35	15	17	102	62	85
5	River Plate (Argentina) (4)	54	27	12	15	113	67	66
6	Olimpia (Paraguay) (10)	64	24	18	22	90	82	66
7	Boca Juniors (Argentina) (5)	47	27	8	12	76	41	62
8	Cerro Porteno (Paraguay) (9)	64	22	18	24	93	97	62
9	Palmeiras (Brazil) (5)	44	28	4	12	73	43	60
10	Guarani (Paraguay) (6)	59	21	17	21	78	74	59
11	Universidad Catol. (Chile) (5)	52	23	10	19	91	79	56
12	Estudiantes (Argentina) (4)	31	22	3	6	44	20	47
13	Colo Colo (Chile) (6)	51	19	9	23	87	95	47
14	Emelec (Ecuador) (6)	51	17	10	24	62	81	44
15	Deportivo Cali (Colombia) (6)	41	16	9	16	62	66	41
16	Barcelona (Ecuador) (6)	45	15	11	19	53	60	41
17	Rosario Cent. (Argentina) (5)	30	16	7	7	44	29	39
18	Sporting Cristal (Peru) (6)	42	12	15	15	49	60	39
19	Racing Club (Argentina) (3)	27	16	6	5	54	26	38
20	Universidad de Chile (7)	44	15	8	21	64	70	38
21	Deportivo Ital. (Venezuela) (6)	44	14	9	21	44	81	37
22	Millonarios (Colombia) (7)	38	13	8	17	46	50	34
23	Union Española (Chile) (4)	35	12	9	14	46	51	33
24	Santos (Brazil) (4)	22	14	3	5	60	32	31
25	Sao Paulo (Brazil) (2)	23	12	7	4	39	18	31
26	Jorge Wilsterman (Bolivia) (7)	38	11	9	18	39	70	31
27	Crubeiro (Brazil) (2)	22	14	2	6	42	27	30
28	Botafogo (Brazil) (2)	17	10	3	4	30	23	23
29	Liga Deport. U. (Ecuador) (2)	20	8	6	6	31	25	22
30	Nacional (Ecuador) (4)	24	8	6	10	27	30	22
31	Bolivar (Bolivia) (3)	23	5	9	9	25	40	19
32	San Lorenzo (Argentina) (2)	15	7	4	4	26	10	18
33	Alianza Lima (Peru) (4)	24	6	5	13	24	37	17
34	Ind. Santa Fe (Colombia) (3)	22	5	6	11	30	44	16
35	Nacional Med. (Columbia) (3)	18	5	5	8	18	24	15
36	Dep. Municipal (Bolivia) (3)	20	6	3	11	39	49	15
37	Galicia (Venezuela) (6)	36	5	5	26	30	64	15
38	Huracan (Argentina) (1)	11	6	2	3	19	12	14
39	Portuguesa (Venezuela) (2)	12	3	6	3	9	13	12
40	The Strongest (Bolivia) (3)	16	4	4	8	18	39	12
41	Wanderers (Chile) (1)	12	4	3	5	20	22	11
42	America (Ecuador) (2)	12	4	2	6	13	22	10
43	Defensor Lima (Peru) (1)	10	4	1	5	8	12	9
44	Dep. Ind. Medel. (Colom.) (1)	10	4	1	5	15	21	9
45	Fluminense (Brazil) (1)	6	4	0	2	16	6	8
46	Newell's OB (Argentina) (1)	7	3	2	2	9	9	8
47	Oriente Petrolero (Bolivia) (2)	12	3	2	7	15	26	8
48	Deportivo Por. (Venezuela) (1)	12	3	2	7	8	23	8
49	Valencia (Venezuela) (3)	16	2	4	10	16	35	8
50	Huachipato (Chile) (1)	6	2	2	2	10	10	6
51	Juan Aurich (Peru) (1)	8	2	2	4	14	20	6
52	Deportivo Quito (Ecuador) (2)	10	1	4	5	7	19	6
53	Vasco da Gama (Brazil) (1)	6	1	3	2	7	7	2
54	U. Magdalena (Colombia) (1)	6	2	1	3	7	8	5
55	Defensor Arica (Peru) (1)	6	1	3	2	5	6	5
56	Sport Boys (Peru) (1)	8	2	1	5	10	11	5
57	America (Colombia) (1)	10	1	3	6	12	22	5
58	31 de Octubre (Bolivia) (1)	10	2	1	7	11	28	5
59	Chaco Petrolero (Bolivia) (2)	12	2	1	9	8	22	5
60	Nautico (Brazil) (1)	6	1	2	3	7	8	4
61	Atletico Mineiro (Brazil) (1)	6	0	4	2	5	6	4
62	Union San Felipe (Chile) (1)	6	1	2	3	5	8	4
63	Univer. Catolica (Ecuador) (1)	6	1	2	3	2	5	4
64	Atletico Junior (Colombia) (1)	6	1	2	3	5	9	4
65	U. D. Canarias (Venezuela) (1)	6	1	2	3	3	7	4
66	Deportivo Lara (Venezuela) (1)	10	1	2	7	5	16	4
67	Bahia (Brazil) (2)	4	1	1	2	4	7	3
68	Wanderers (Uruguay) (1)	6	1	1	4	8	10	3
69	Union Huaral (Peru) (1)	6	0	3	3	8	17	3
70	Libertad (Paraguay) (1)	6	1	1	4	2	13	3
71	Nueve de Oct. (Ecuador) (2)	10	1	1	8	14	28	3
72	Rangers (Chile) (1)	10	1	1	8	11	26	3
73	Always Ready (Bolivia) (1)	6	0	2	4	2	17	2
74	Universitario (Bolivia) (2)	6	0	2	4	2	19	2
75	Aurora (Bolivia) (1)	4	0	1	3	2	14	1
76	Litoral (Bolivia) (1)	6	0	1	5	1	14	1
77	Everest (Ecuador) (1)	2	0	0	2	1	14	0

(Number in brackets represents number of appearances in Copa Libertadores)

Deutschla über Alle once mor

by Keir Radnedge

BY THE time you've reached the quarter finals of any European competition — particularly this season — there are no easy draws. But the various West German representatives in Zurich on January 14 must have come away from the UEFA competition draw pretty satisfied. It starts at the top. West Germany could have faced a much harder test than Spain. Borussia MG on present form have no call to fear anyone, and Eintracht Frankfurt (Cup Winners Cup) and Hamburg (UEFA Cup) should also see the last four. With the European Championship finals possibly set for West Germany, it seems it's going to be Deutschland über Alles all over again . . .

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Holland v Belgium: Georg Knobel I know for a fairly taciturn man. But even he must have turned a hair or two the way the draw worked out. To play the Belgians every now and again would be fair enough. But there seems to be an international conspiracy.

The Belgians were the toughest of opponents in the last World Cup qualifiers: they bar the Dutch path to Argentina. Now they're there again, and who is to say they won't upset the World Cup runners-up?

In the past the Belgians have been foiled by their own lack of confidence, which has led manager Raymond Goethals to use a variety of defensive ploys. Still, he was forced to produce a new-look side for the friendly in Antwerp last spring and the reward was a 1-0 victory. Admittedly the Dutch were without Johan Cruyff and Johan Neeskens, but their results through the year don't inspire any confidence that they have the stomach for another hard encounter with the *Diables Rouges*.

Knobel's men played seven games last year, winning only two — even if one of those was the scintillating 3-0 triumph over Poland which brought them this far. Worse, from Holland's point of view, they know that if they beat the Belgians they are likely to face Russia, the team everyone wants to avoid.

The PSV men could, by the time of the quarter final, be more concerned about their aspirations in the Champions' Cup, so I wouldn't be surprised to see the Belgians, as in 1972, come through to the last four, even though Holland might be first in line to stage the finals, otherwise.

Czechoslovakia v Russia: It wasn't until 1958 that these two teams first met, with the Russians winning 2-1 in Prague. The Czechoslovaks were beaten 3-1 in Moscow the following year and by 3-0 — a bad omen this — in the Nations' Cup semi-final in Marseille in 1960.

Vaclav Jezek's men scored a surprisingly good undefeated record through 1975, playing ten games, winning four and drawing six, and this was enough to ensure them top place in *France Football's* annual international assessment. The Russians were third, though their record — won nine, drawn two, lost one — looks immeasurably better.

However, these successes of the Kiev-based side were achieved mainly against second-class soccer nations such as Turkey, Eire and Norway. And if the Turks did beat them 1-0 towards the end of the year in the European Championship, it didn't matter, apart from demonstrating that the Dynamo was running down a bit!

Now, after a short break and with Oleg Blokhin under the challenge of living up to his European Footballer of the Year award, few people will be tipping England's conquerors. Kiev manager Valeri Lobanovski doubtless hopes to face Belgium in the semi-final — the Russians are better built to deal with them than the flightly Dutchmen — and, if the finals are to be held in West Germany, that the world champions will be eased out in their semi-final.

The last time the Russians played in Munich they were beaten 4-1, and then, of course, the West Germans beat them in the final of this competition last time out — 3-0.

Renegades

Spain v West Germany (or Greece): Since I can't imagine the West Germans being beaten at home by Malta in their last qualifying game, we'll proceed on the basis of a Spain-West German tie. In fact, the last time these teams met, shortly before the 1974 World Cup, the Spaniards won with a goal from Juan Manuel Asensi, bringing the nations' post-war record to six matches — the West Germans having won three and the Spaniards two.

By the time this quarter final comes around, Borussia Moenchengladbach and Real Madrid — the two basic teams — will have sorted out their Champions' Cup-tie and that may provide a better clue to the outcome.

Lazzy Kubala was quite satisfied with the draw — he didn't want Russia or Yugoslavia — and reckons his team will be allowed to play a bit by the European champions. Helmut Schoen was also mildly pleased — above all because West Germany seem to be placed on the slightly easier side of the draw. The task shouldn't be beyond them — even without Spanish renegades Breitner and Netzer.

Yugoslavia v Wales: On paper, no contest. The Yugoslavs beat Northern

EUROPEAN CHA

Yugoslavia v
Holland v Bel

EUROPEAN CUP
Quarter-finals

Benfica (Port.) v Bayern M (W. Ge
D'mo Kiev (USSR) v St Etienne
Hajduk Split (Yugo.) v PSV Eindh (Ho
Borussia M'chengl'bach (W. Ger.) v Real M (S

CUP WINNERS' CUP
Quarter-finals

Den Haag (Holl.) v West
Celtic v Sachse Zwickau (E.
Eintracht F'fort (W.Ger.) v Sturm (Au
Anderlecht (Bel.) v Wre

Ireland to get this far, reached the last ei of the World Cup and were runners-up Italy in the 1968 Championship after beat England in the semi-finals. Also, they w both their previous matches against Welsh — 5-2 in Belgrade 23 years ago a 3-1 in Cardiff the year after.

Yet, despite all that, the Welsh reacti was a surprisingly happy one — mainly the basis that it was an advantage play the second leg at home. Whether that really carry much weight against a defe strengthened by the recall of Jo Katalinski from Nice seems doubt Certainly the other British team manag — Dave Clements (N. Ireland), Wi Ormond (Scotland) and Don Revie, w quick to offer plenty of help to Wa English manager, Mike Smith.

But his record in charge, with victo home and away against Hungary, leads to suspect that he is quite capable planning his own campaign. Where he co run into trouble is in obtaining a fully squad for the away leg on April 24. *Fra Football* rated Wales fourth equal (w

and s re?

AMPIONSHIP Quarter-finals

Wales Spain	v	W. Germany or Greece
Czech'slovakia	v	Russia

UEFA CUP
Quarter-finals

Dynamo Dr's'n (E. Ger.)	v	Liverpool
Bruges (Bel.)	v	AC Milan (It.)
Barcelona (Sp)	v	Levski Spartak Sofia (Bulg.)
Hamburg SV (W. Ger.)	v	Stal Mielec (Pol.)

UNDER-23 CHAMPIONSHIP
Quarter-finals

Hungary	v	England
Bulgaria	v	Yugoslavia
Holland	v	Scotland
France	v	Russia

West Germany) on their 1975 record, with the Yugoslavs second. Presumably the Yugoslavs will also be recalling Dragan Dzajic (Bastia) and Branko Oblak (Schalke). These, together with home-based Jurica Jerkovic, Nenad Bjekovic, and Ivica Surjak should carry too much fire-power for the Welsh.

Then, no doubt, manager Ante Mladinic will hope to have discovered that Spain have surprised the West Germans in the complementary quarter final . . .

UNDER-23 CHAMPIONSHIP

Hungary v England and **Bulgaria v Yugoslavia** with the winners paired up in one semi-final. It's **Holland v Scotland** and **France v Russia** on the other side. Not a competition worth wasting much space on — enough to say that Yugoslavia, England, Holland and Russia are likely semi-finalists with possibly a Holland-England final. But, with the opportunity to field a couple of over-age players there's no telling how the various managers may manipulate their teams.

Anatol Konkov of the USSR and Dynamo Kiev.

CHAMPIONS' CUP

Borussia MG
(1-1, 6-1 v SW Innsbruck; 2-0, 2-2 v Juventus) v
Real Madrid
(4-1, 0-1 v Dinamo Bucharest; 1-4, 5-1 v Derby)

The Moenchengladbach men will be busy, now that they also form the backbone of the West German national team. They'll also be pretty fed up with the sight of Pirri & Co before long. But they must be favourites. The pairing means the first competitive chance for Günter Netzer to show his old admirers how his game has developed since his transfer 2½ years ago.

Netzer has always been confident that, face to face in Europe, Madrid could win with something to spare. Since his transfer, the clubs have met twice in friendlies in West Germany — Borussia winning the first 4-2 and the second ending 3-3.

On that basis, Netzer might argue it's Madrid's turn now. But I can't see the somewhat staid Juan Sol and Gregorio Benito coping with the speed and skill of Danish stars Henning Jensen and Allan Simonsen, the latter rated the best foreigner in the *Bundesliga*. If Madrid can get injury-dogged Paul Breitner fit in time, there could be plenty of goals in the tie. Either way, it'll be a surprise if six times champions Madrid can overcome the UEFA Cup holders — whatever they may have done to Derby.

Benfica
(7-0, 0-1 v Fenerbahce; 5-2, 1-3 v Ujpest) v
Bayern (holders)
(5-0, 3-1 v Jeunesse d'Esch; 0-1, 2-0 v Malmoe FF)

If the pressure is off most of the Bayern players now as far as the national team are concerned, the pressure is on to show they haven't entirely blown up yet. Gerd Müller, Uli Hoeness and Bjorn Andersson should be back after their long injury lay-offs, and the cancellation of a winter 'break' tour to the US won't have done Franz Beckenbauer or Sepp Maier any harm.

Klaus Wunder has been sold to Hannover and there are more rumours about the fate of coach Dettmar Cramer. Still, Benfica are a changed side too. No Eusebio, Simoes or Humberto now. But new manager Mario Wilson has worked hard to build up teamwork and tactics.

●*Continued overleaf*

European Championship . . . European Cup . . . Cup Winners Cup and UEFA Cup previews by Keir Radnedge

Reservatio Kiev are fa

Mijail Fomenko of Dynamo Kiev.

That was shown in the recent 4-1 away win over Boavista which sent the Eagles of Lisbon leapfrogging to the top of the table. Nevertheless, the direct attack of even a below-par Ujpest upset the Portuguese in the second round and I can't see them being the team to strip Bayern of a title they've won for the past two seasons.

Hajduk Split
(5-0, 3-0 v Floriana;
4-0, 3-2 v RWD Molenbeek) v
PSV Eindhoven
(2-1, 8-0 v Linfield;
3-1, 4-0 v Ruch Chorzow)

You could toss a coin and have as much chance or forecasting this one. Two extremely strong teams with plenty of players who will be tied up too in the European Championship. On the face of it I'd prefer to see the more attractive PSV going through, if only for the hope of seeing some exciting football from Ralf Edstroem, Rene and Willy van der Kerkhof and Willy van der Kuylen in the semi-finals.

The Dutch side did well to thrash Ruch as they did. Then again, Hajduk have that home and away victory over RWD to be proud of. If RWD aren't quite the team they promised to be, the Yugoslavs seem to have a never-ending stream of talent replacing the exiled Dragan Holcer and several others.

One man whose absence will be felt, though, is Branko Oblak. He moved to Schalke after the second round and it's his absence, the fact that Hajduk will have to overcome the winter break, and PSV's fortune in playing the first leg away that makes me tip the Philips club.

Dynamo Kiev
(2-2, 1-0 v Olympiakos;
3-0, 2-0 v Akranes) v
Saint-Etienne
(2-0, 3-1 v Koebenhavns BK;
2-0, 2-1 v Rangers)

On past record there seems just one team in it. However well St-Etienne have done, catching up on Nice in France where they won the Cup and League double last term, it hardly seems feasable that they'll give Kiev, the Cup Winners' Cup holders and Russian national side, much of a run for their money.

But . . . Kiev showed at the close of the recent Russian season that they were tiring, and that was reflected in the 1-0 international defeat by Turkey. Since the Kiev players will be looking ahead to the European Championship too, they will hardly be allowed to get out of match practice.

Yet that could tell against them — particularly against this French side, intelligently prepared by Roby Herbin, and with 21-year-old newcomer Dominique Rocheteau in scintillating form. Rocheteau is a quick, skilful winger and, set alongside the Revelli brothers Patrick and Hervé and supported whole-heartedly by Jean-Michel Larqué in midfield, he could set the Russians some problems. I'd put my money on Kiev . . . but not a lot of it.

CUP WINNERS' CUP
Eintracht Frankfurt
(5-1, 6-2 v Coleraine;
2-1, 1-0 v Atletico Madrid) v
Sturm Graz
(3-1, 0-1 v Slavia Sofia;
2-0, 1-1 v Haladas)

Eintracht, the only *Bundesliga* team to scorn the use of foreigners, are unhappy favourites for this competition. At least they should have few problems with the Australians, particularly bearing in mind the fine form this season of World Cup winger Jürgen Grabowski.

The Eintracht skipper plays a roving game out of midfeld for his club, and his incisive passing, plus his strength and direction of Bernd Hölzenbein should soon put Frankfurt on the way towards the last four. Incidentally, they beat Bayern 5-0 recently . . .

Celtic
(2-0, 7-0 v Valur Reykjavik;
0-0, 3-1 v Boavista) v
Sachsenring Zwickau
(0-0, 2-0 v Panathinaikos;
0-1, 1-0 v Fiorentina)

Zwickau have but one well-known player — 29-year-old East German World Cup goalkeeper Jürgen Croy. It was his saves in a penalty contest which saw Zwickau through the Cup Final with Dynamo Dresden, and it took a further penalty series for the East Germans to eliminate Fiorentina.

Celtic weren't too impressive away to Boavista, but the complementary characteristics of Kenny Dalglish and Johannes Edvaldsson ought to see them safely into the last four — to say nothing of the latest in a long line of rejuvenated goalkeepers, Peter Latchford.

Anderlecht
(0-1, 2-0 v Rapid Bucharest;
3-0, 0-1 v Borac Banjaluka) v
Wrexham
(2-1, 1-1 v Djurgaarden;
2-0, 1-1 v Stal Rzeszow)

ns—but vourites

Anderlecht officials were more concerned after the draw about where Wrexham was, and how far away the nearest airport rather than the ability of their opponents. I think Arie Haan, Rob Rensenbrink, Jean Dockx and all might have a little more respect for Wrexham after this tie.

Not that I think, either, that John Neal's men will upset the Belgians' objective of taking another step towards the final in Brussels. Anderlecht have too much of everything.

Ado Den Haag
(2-0, 2-0 v Vejle BK;
3-2, 2-1 v Lens) v
West Ham
(2-2, 3-0 v Lahden Reipas;
1-1, 3-1 v Ararat Erevan)

The most famous name around Den Haag is that of Yugoslav coach Vujadin Boskov, who hitched a lift with the West Ham bus when he came to Britain on a spying trip recently. Boskov saw the Hammers lose 4-1 to Aston Villa, but it's unlikely that the Dutch can repeat that.

Ex-Feyenoord striker Lex Schoenmaker, defender Aad Mansveld and midfielder Aad Kila are their best players — Mansveld and Kila both survivors of that horific night when three own goals helped Wolves on towards the 1971-2 UEFA Cup Final.

West Ham had to struggle in Finland and have slipped badly in the League. But there's no justification to justify one bookie rating them at 7-1 for the Cup, with Den Haag 5-1!

UEFA CUP
Dynamo Dresden
(2-2, 4-1 v Tirgu Mures;
2-2, 1-0 v Honved;
3-0, 1-3 v Torpedo Moscow) v
Liverpool
(0-1, 3-1 v Hibernian;
3-1, 6-0 v S. Sebastian;
2-1, 3-0 v Slask Wroclow)

Liverpool beat Dresden at this stage three years ago on their way to the trophy, and despite the cartilage injury which has claimed Peter Cormack, shouldn't allow the East German police team to take revenge. A warning for Bob Paisley though: Hans-Jürgen Kreische is back in top form. He scored both goals in the important 2-0 top-of-the-table win over Lokomotiv Leipzig and tops the scorers with 14 goals in 13 games.

Hamburger SV
0-0, 4-2 v Young Boys Berne;
1-1, 4-0 v Red Star Belgrade;
2-0, 1-2 v Porto) v
Stal Mielec
(1-0, 2-1 v Holbaek;
1-0, 0-1 v Carl Zeiss Jena;
0-1, 2-0 v Inter Bratislava)

Hamburg, with their ambitious team-building plans, shouldn't be too hard pressed by the Poles, who will be leaning even more on Henryk Kasperczak in mid-field and Witold Karas up front after the departure of Jan Domarksi to France. The West Germans, third in the *Bundesliga* at the winter break, were most impressive in their thrashing of Red Star, and now that Willie Reimann seems to have solved their centre-forward problem — at least for the time being — Stal goalkeeper Zygmunt Kukla could be far busier than the man who is, on form the *Bundesliga's* No. 1, Rudi Kargus.

Brugge
(3-4, 3-0 v Lyon; 0-3, 4-0 v Ipswich;
1-0, 1-0 v Roma) v
AC Milan
(0-0, 1-0 v Everton;
0-0, 3-0 v Athlone;
4-0, 0-2 v Spartak Moscow)

Possibly the closest tie of the third European competition. The Belgians are involved in a tight three-horse race for their own league title, having hit form since the remarkable reversal against Ipswich. Raoul Lambert, at 32, is still finding the net regularly — particularly since the arrival of young midfielder Rene van der Eychen. Milan are slowly overcoming the traumas of the Rivera takeover, with the Golden Boy himself in fine form. Penalties could settle it.

CF Barcelona
(0-1, 6-1 v PAOK, 3-0, 4-0 v Lazio;
3-1, 1-0 v Vasas) v
Levsky-Spartak Sofia
(3-0, 4-1 v Eskisehirspor;
2-3, 2-1 v MSV; 1-2, 2-1 v Ajax)

A nasty one for CFB, troubled as they are by the disciplinary indescretions of Hugo Sotil and a transfer request from Mario Marinho. The 2-1 league win over Real Madrid consolidated the position of Hennes Weisweiler and have silenced for the moment those who say he can't wait to get back to West Germany.

Levsky did exceptionally well to beat Ajax, and Voin Voinov and Pavel Panov could embarrass CFB's much-shuffled defence. Johan Neeskens is in top form now though — he's been promoted by the fans to the role of Johan I — and his determination could drive the Spaniards through.

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World Soccer Diary

World Soccer Diary

REAL SLUMP

REAL MADRID'S recent demise does not augur well for their European Champions Cup tie with Borussia Moenchengladbach. In fact things have been going wrong for them since they were in that scintillating come-back against Derby County in the previous round.

League defeats by Barcelona and Atletico Madrid cost them their leadership after a number of drawn games since the start of the season and more recently came a third defeat away to Santander.

Conversely Borussia have been consolidating their position at the top of the Bundesliga and resumed after the winter pause to defeat Hannover 2-0.

Before the break their attacking trio Danish internationals Allan Simonsen and Henning Jensen plus West German cap Jupp Heynckes had been responsible for 26 of their 32 League goals. Both Simonsen and Jensen are rated as world class players in Germany — the only forwards so considered oddly enough.

WORLD OF SPORT gave another of their European glimpses when they showed PSV Eindhoven slaughtering MVV Maastricht 6-1 in a recent Dutch League game.

PSV's free-scoring approach which has led to the three goals per game average and kept them in close proximity to leaders Ajax, may prove the ultimate weapon against their European Cup opponents Hajduk Split.

However, the Yugoslavians have a couple of other useful forwards themselves in Surjak and Zungul both of whom are capable of upsetting the rather more suspect PSV defence.

ST ETIENNE, who are hoping to go one better than last season when they reached the semi-final of the competition, might well be advised to realise that Dynamo Kiev are far from being a one-man team.

Oleg Blokhin is a talented player but not the only attacker likely to cause the French side problems. One of the most successful moves which the Russian side makes is for Blokhin, a naturally left sided player to move to the right and allow Onischenko to have a go himself with his educated left peg.

Blokhin, who won the European Footballer of the Year in a canter, has been a prolific scorer in his native country for four years now though still only aged 23. In fact he has registered 71 League goals in his time.

He first came to prominence with the Olympic side in Munich when he was still only 19 years of age.

BENFICA MIGHT have chosen the right moment to slip back at the top of the Portuguese League in beating their nearest rivals Boavista 4-1 in Oporto.

But their opponents in the European Cup Bayern Munich will be hoping for better form in the second half of their League programme having finished the first half in 10th place.

Injuries have been plentiful in the Bayern camp but with Gerd Muller making a scoring come-back in a Cup match in December in which Uli Hoeness also figured, prospects might be improving for the holders of the trophy over the last two seasons.

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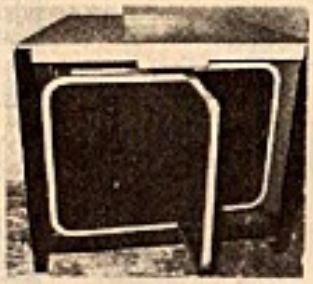

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International Post-Mortem . . . by Eric Batty

Scotland dominate —Romania stay level

Scotland 1 Romania 1
Turkey 0 West Germany 5
Italy 3 Greece 2

Scotland 1 Romania 1

WITH SCOTLAND already eliminated by Spain from the European championship group, a mere 11,000 odd spread themselves around the huge Hampden bowl. They had little to enthuse about, either in the result or the quality of the football and Romania with a strong cleverly meshed defence earned a fifth draw in their six competitive games.

It was something of a new look Scotland with Cruickshank, the 34-year-old veteran, recalled in goal — with nothing to do, apart from the shot that beat him; Two new caps were Doyle (Ayr) in midfield and Gray (Aston Villa) in attack. Though Willie Ormond has his critics he was wise to experiment in a match that did not matter, but perhaps he should have ventured even further?

Territorially it was Scotland on top throughout apart from a few isolated breakaways and little was seen of Dudu Georgescu, the European top league goalscorer in 1974-75. Iordanescu showed a few glimpses of talent on the left wing but Lucescu, a veteran now and switched to the right to accomodate him, is clearly past his peak. Georgescu and Iordanescu could conceivably have created problems for Scotland had they ever got better support from behind, but they never did.

Scotland poured on the pressure but real chances were rare against a tightly packed defence in which Raducanu proved he is still lively in goal whenever he was needed. The Scottish shot that beat him came following a foul by Satmareanu on Dalglish. The free kick taken by the Derby 'hammer' Bruce Rioch who used his ferocious shooting power to drive the ball inside the wall and beyond the reach of Raducanu into the far corner of the net. That was all Scotland had to show for almost 41 minutes almost constant effort.

Worse was to follow for soon after Hainal had replaced Lucescu, the winger beat Martin Buchan (captain for the first time) and run on to slip the ball past the 'keeper as he came out. McDougall and Lorimer now came on for Doyle and Dalglish but the Rumanian defence held out.

Scotland: Cruickshank; Brownlie, Donnachie; Buchan, Jackson, Rioch; Doyle (Lorimer), Hartford, Gray, Dalglish (McDougall), Gemmill.

Romania: Radacanu; Cheran, Sandu; Anghelini, Satmareanu, Dinu; Lucescu (Hainal), Romila, Georgescu, Boloni, Jordanescu.

Turkey 0 West Germany 5

THIS WAS West Germany's biggest away win for almost five years but it included a penalty miss by Beckenbauer and two "little" goals by Ronnie Worm of Duisberg, who came on as substitute in midfield for the second half.

The pitch cut up very badly and was extremely heavy, perhaps more to the German's liking and maybe contributing to the result. However, in 18 minutes the most reliable German scorer of the moment, Heynckes, ghosted into the right place to meet a free kick from his Borussia club-mate Danner and side foot the ball in for the first goal.

Seven minutes later Beer, the Hertha midfield player Helmut Schon is trying to make into a centre forward, got the second and then after the interval came the pair from Worm.

Beer again made the running for the third goal, beating two opponents before shooting and Turkish 'keeper Rasim got his body behind the ball but failed to hold it. Worm pounced like a cat to score from close in.

A similar chance brought Worm his second and Germany's fourth. Italian referee Michelotto awarded a penalty for a foul on Beer and Beckenbauer glided up to take the kick, placed his shot to the 'keeper's left hand but failed to hit it firmly enough. Rasim got both hands to the ball but couldn't hold it and Worm was the first to react and hammer the ball in.

The final goal was the best of the game, set up by Holzenbein and Worm and finished, fittingly enough by Heynckes to make it 5-0 but it seems unlikely that the Germans have solved all their problems with this result.

Turkey: Rasim; Turgay, Kadir, Ismail, Alpasian (Ali); Sabahattin, Engin, Fatih; Ali Kemal, Gokmen, Cemil (Mustafa).

West Germany: Kargus; Vogts, Beckenbauer, Schwarzenbeck, Dietz (Reichel); Danner, Stielike (Worm), Holzenbein; Wimmer, Bonhoff, Beer, Heynckes.

Italy 3 Greece 2

THIS FRIENDLY match a few days after Christmas in Florence was a revenge game for the Greeks' 2-1 win over Italy in 1972. Alketas Panagoulias, the Greek boss had hoped to field the team that drew 1-1 with West Germany in Dusseldorf in October but his key man Delikaris was not fully fit and they had to make changes.

For the first time, with Facchetti on the reserve bench after 83 caps replaced by the young Juventus star Scirea, the Italians began to look as if they intended playing a more open attacking game. Certainly it was Italy who carried the game forward for long periods but as is to be expected they gave something away in defensive terms, though some of that can no doubt be attributed to Scirea being nervous.

When Zaccarelli replaced Benetti, the Italian team was almost entirely new with only Zoff remaining from the old guard.

Paolo Pulici (Torino) gave Italy the lead after only six minutes and though Kritikopoulos equalised before the break, Pulici again scored two minutes into the second half. Greece again equalised, this time through Serafis but the winning goal came just after the hour from a penalty taken incomparably by Savoldi to give Italy a win they deserved.

Italy: Zoff; Gentile, Beltugi, Scirea, Rocca; Benetti (Zaccarelli), Antonioni, Cappello; Causio, Savoldi, Pulici.

Greece: Kelesidis; Kyrastas, Pallas, Firos, Synetopoulos; Serafis, Terzanidis, Kodas; Kritikopoulos, Papaioannou, Karavitis (Delikaris) (Nicolaou).

Mazzone and Fiorentina pull in horns

SINCE I wish to talk about Italian football, for a change, I may be excused if I start with a quotation from Ovid. Video meliora proboque. Deteriora sequor. **I see and perceive the better course, it is the worse that I pursue. I was reminded of it by last December's visit by Fiorentina to West Ham for the second leg of Gigi Peronace's Anglo-Italian Cup-winners' Cup.**

For the first time, I had the pleasure of meeting Carlo Mazzone, a tall, dark, prematurely bald, gently courteous and intelligent man who, at the age of 37, became manager of Fiorentina this season. It was, so to speak, a "reward" for his astonishing success with little Ascoli, the team from the Abruzzi, not very far from Rome but very different, whose stadium has a capacity for more people than live in the town!

Mazzone played for them, miraculously brought them up, as manager, to the First Division, and kept them there. That was enough for Fiorentina, who seem to hop impulsively from youth at the helm to waning age. They sacked the excellent Radice, now doing so well with Torino, and inexplicably appointed the veteran Nereo Rocco, well over sixty. This failed miserably, so they turned to youth again, in the shape of Carlo Mazzone.

Mazzone insisted to me, when I interpreted a conversation between him and West Ham's elder statesmen, Billy Nicholson and Ron Greenwood, that he and the younger Italian managers were sick of *catenaccio*, that they wanted to break away into a more attractive and aggressive style, make their players more versatile and flexible. Things had begun well this season, he said, but then injuries and misfortune had checked the team, so that, given the fanatical concentration on results in Italy, he had had to pull in his horns.

Greenwood and Nicholson were generously ready to concede that Fiorentina, when the teams first met in Florence last September, played a far more open and enterprising game than they had seen from Italian teams at large. It could hardly be said of Fiorentina's performance at West Ham, where they played a rigid *catenaccio* formation, with Pellegrini a purely defensive sweeper. After the game I said as much to Mazzone, and his answer was, it seemed to me, rather depressingly significant.

Fiorentina, he said, had not played defensively, nor intended to do so. They meant to set up their stall in midfield, but the fact that they got an early goal and thus forced West Ham into all out attack meant that they were driven deeper into their own half.

Example

I don't think those spectators who jeered and whistled Fiorentina after the game would be readily convinced by that. To me, it was an example of the self-deception which infects Italian football. Its all, I suppose, relative. If you are so brain washed by defensive precepts as to believe that keeping three men upfield is the wildest form of folly, then I suppose Fiorentina's performance at Upton Park, which features what one might call two and a half spearheads, was fairly enterprising.

The trouble is, of course, that when you have impetuous, impatient clubs like Fiorentina, who will sack a manager as soon as look at him if he loses a couple of games (he? his team!) caution is inevitable. So when Carlo Mazzone talks about giving back his men il *gusto di giocare*, the pleasure of playing, we may be excused for taking it with a pinch or two of salt.

There is no pleasure at all, as we know, in playing *against* Italian teams. Trevor Brooking, who was as helpless as anybody in the West Ham team, for all his talents, his success in Lisbon, lamented afterwards that the Fiorentina players had simply operated in triangles, and made Hammers do infinitely more running around.

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by BRIAN GLANVILLE

"We might have to revert to the old style winger, try to get around the outside. They just played in triangles which made us work twice as hard as them." Giancarlo Antognoni's remark was, in the circumstances, depressingly apposite. "The English improvise very little. Always the same kind of play. It's good enough; but it's sufficient to put a couple of good defenders at the back."

Mazzone said that "the future of Italian football is tied to Antognoni. If he 'completes' himself, he could be the key man for the next ten years. What he lacks is 'the tranquility of playing', people ask too much of him. He's the most modest player I've got and the best. He has vision, a good shot, a fine physique."

Operate

The obverse of Italy's defensive obsessions is, as I have pointed out before, the fact that by a somewhat Darwinian process they produce forwards who can operate under such circumstances, attackers with the pace, control, initiative and strength to take on two or three defenders at a time and score goals. Speggiorin, known caustically in Florence as "The Mysterious Object" because of his fluctuations in form after a vastly expensive transfer, simply whirled past McDowell to left foot the only goal of the game, with what was barely half a chance.

Don Revie was watching, and the match must have been a chilling experience. Ramsey's men lost home and away to Italy because their naive attacking methods could not bring success against the packed Italian defence, while they thus left themselves open for the quick counter attack.

Significance

Next summer in the United States, England and Italy will play a dress rehearsal for their World Cup matches which, I believe, has great significance, in the moral-psychological sense. If England win, or draw and dominate, then the Italians will be thrown into their customary orgy of breast beating, gloom and self-recrimination. Victory would put their tails up very high.

As things stand, it grieves me to say that I think the Italians must be favourites in the group. Our chief hope is that one or two of our better, more unorthodox, players will come through, and that Don Revie will prove a much quicker learner than he has been in his first unimpressive year.

The American tournament could well be fascinating, though I shudder at the thought that Italy will be playing in New York. Alas, "ethnic" soccer fans in that city seem to be among the most violent, chauvinistic and primitive anywhere, whether they be Italians, Poles or Greeks.

Memories

I still have horrifying memories of a match between Cerro of Montevideo and Cagliari in the Yankee Stadium, one humid, high summer evening in 1967. A Cerro player badly fouled a Cagliari man — the teams were respectively representing New York and Chicago. There was a fracas, Leo Goldstein, the little American referee, was indecisive, and at last an Italian fan cautiously straddled the low barrier, climbed it, took a kick at a linesmen, of all things and people, then ran away.

The stadium police force, a Fred Karno brigade, reacted not at all, which encouraged another Italian fan, a fat little fellow, to climb over, take a kick and scuttle off. Very soon we had a couple of dozen of these intrepid Latins on the field, in full cry after Leo Goldstein, who sprinted splendidly, till he fell over the edge of the sandy infield, but still managed to kick out at his pursuers, till at last the stadium police force caught up with them and tardily rescued him. I'm happy to say the poor little fellow, who had survived a Nazi concentration camp, and died a few years ago, was little the worse for wear.

"Those Italian fans," said the head of the Karno police force, whose name was D'Alessandro, "behaved like animals." When I wrote as much in the NEW STATESMAN, or quoted him, at least, to that effect, an irate lady correspondent took me to task for the implicit libel on animals; who, as we know, seldom sue. She may have been right. I can only hope and pray that the animals won't be in full cry again in New York next summer, but I am not at all optimistic.

The man in the bowler hat . . .

IN A recent interview Sir Alf Ramsey, former England manager, admitted that he now watched football from the terraces, "disguised" in a bowler hat; it was really quite a different game. He didn't shout, but he did clap, and he often smiled: at last he was able to watch players who weren't English. He'd never, he said, been able to be a funny man; but he wanted now to return to football.

Standin' on the terraces it's quite a different game.
I have to watch the Scotsmen, and it's really not the same.
When Lorimer would get the ball and canter down the park,
I'd shut my eyes and turn away until it came to Clarke.

I never join the choruses, I just don't seem to fit,
When one end shouts, "United!" and the other answers, "- - - - !"
And if a forward scores a goal and everybody cheers,
I simply grab my bowler hat, and pull it down my ears.

I never was a funny man, it wasn't just my style,
But nowadays I clap a lot, and frequently I smile,
Especially when I think about the day I got the sack.
They may have bowler-hatted me: but soon they'll want me back.

B.G.

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FINN HARPS MARCH TO TITLE WIN

by TONY REID

THE HALF WAY stage of the Eire league season has been reached and the position at the top of the table is most interesting. Finn Harps, the Donegal club from the town of Ballybofey, lead the way with 21 points from the 13 games played and the way that Harps are playing their remaining 13 games could turn out to be a triumphal march to the club's first ever Championship victory.

And few would deny the Harps the right to claim the title. Their goal-scoring feats are far and away above anything that the rest of the clubs can produce. They have hit 32 goals in their 13 games to date and that is only four less than last season's champions, Bohemians, scored on their way to the 1975 title!

In fact, at the half way stage last season Bohemians had notched 15 goals and this season they have scored only 14 goals at the same stage. In fairness, however, it must be pointed out that Bohs have played one game less than Finn Harps.

Failure

This came about as a result of the Dalymount Park lights failing ten minutes into the second half of the Bohemians and Limerick league fixture on the last Sunday in December. The Cork referee, Kevin O'Sullivan, allowed the Bohemians officials only five minutes to rectify the matter which turned out to be a phase failure in the local power station and therefore no fault of the home team.

Had the referee used a little common-sense and waited for half an hour the matter would have been put right and the league not now be in a position of having to re-arrange a back match.

Finn Harps home record shows them with five wins and two draws and a scoring rate of 21 for and only six against while their away record is equally impressive with four wins, one draw and one defeat and 11 goals scored and a mere five conceded.

That, in any man's language, is Championship winning form. In November the Harps striker, Brendan Bradley, entered the Eire record books when he scored all six of his side's goals in the league fixture against Sligo Rovers at Finn Park, Ballybofey.

With the second half of the league programme to be completed Bradley tops the Eire goal charts with 19 league goals and if he can maintain the form he is currently displaying he could go on to become the league's all-time record goalscorer in a season.

Another Harps striker, Terry Harkin, the former Coleraine and Northern Ireland international, lies close to Bradley in the goal stakes having hit eight in the league to date. So it is easy to see why Harps are favourites to lift the title and go on into Europe next season as the Eire representatives in the Champions Cup.

Cork Celtic brought the prodigal football son, George Best, to Ireland and boosted their gate from around the usual few thousand to a whopping 12,000 and made a financial killing of at least £5,000. But what a crashing bore the controversial Georgie proved to be to the Cork fans.

Not only did he contribute nothing at all to the match but Cork Celtic lost their vital Championship match to Drogheda United by 2-0. Prior to this game Celtic had run up a pretty impressive record in the league.

Experience

One paper described the game as Cork Celtic's "ten men" against eleven hard-working triers from Drogheda, and another well-known scribe called the Drogheda win "a triumph for football and decency."

After the match it was difficult to ascertain whether or not Georgie would be back to play further games for Celtic. Very few people in Cork will lose sleep should he decide to opt out of Eire football for good. It was that kind of experience.

Athlone Town, who put up such a brave show in the EUFA Cup earlier this season, seem to be coming apart at the seams at present. Although they attained third place in the Championship race by the half-way mark a run of defeats has almost put them out of the running for honours and unless a dramatic improvement in form is shortly forthcoming then the Midlands side can put the present season down to experience.

Their run of misfortune began with a 2-0 league defeat away to Bohemians and this was followed by a 3-2 defeat by Waterford also in the league. In between Athlone lost one of the greatest ever Leinster Cup finals when Bohemians again proved to be a stumbling block that our EUFA Cup heroes could find no way around.

After twenty minutes play Bohs were 3-0 up but Athlone pulled back a goal just before half-time. The second period of play was all action and "the Town" fought back to make the score 3-3 but with only a couple of minutes remaining Gerry Ryan, in scoring Bohemians winner, also notched his own "hat-trick".

Padraig O'Connor had already put Bohemians a goal up early in the first half. Then, on New Years Day, St. Patricks Athletic travelled to Athlone to take on the midlanders in the Dublin City Cup final.

Athlone were badly hit by players suffering from one complaint or another as well as some members losing their usual form and "the Saints" won by the odd goal in five to take this particular trophy for the first time in twenty years.

Of course it is only fair to state that Athlone had to play those four games in a period of ten days. Such a strenuous programme would tax even the energies of fulltimers and is another example of the kind of Blunderland the Eire legislators live in.

The Eire Cup draw has paired last season's finalists, Shelbourne and Home Farm, and the two will meet at Shelbourne's ground, Harolds Cross, on the south side of Dublin. The pick of the round though is undoubtedly the Finn Harps versus Waterford tie which should pack the Ballybofey venue to the hilt.

Former cup specialists, Shamrock Rovers, are drawn against St. Patricks Athletic. The Shamrocks have won the cup twenty times in the competitions fifty four years history.

EIRE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Finn Harps	13	9	3	1	32	11	21
Dundalk	13	7	5	1	29	16	19
Athlone Town	13	7	1	5	20	19	15
Waterford	13	6	5	3	20	16	15
Cork Hibernians	13	5	5	3	15	10	15
Cork Celtic	13	5	4	4	15	15	14
Drogheda Utd	13	5	4	4	16	22	14
Bohemians	12	3	7	2	14	10	13
Shamrock Rov	13	3	4	6	17	23	10
Shelbourne	13	2	5	6	17	23	9
St Patricks A	13	4	1	8	15	23	9
Home Farm	13	2	5	6	19	27	9
Sligo Rovers	13	2	5	6	15	24	9
Limerick	12	3	2	7	11	16	8

ANDRE DUCLOS reports from France

Platini is the new White Hope

MAKE WAY for yet another White Hope, another centre-forward to do for France what Kopa and Fontaine once did. Indeed the new putative hero has already been compared with Kopa for his splendid vision of play, his ability to see the chance for, then hit with marvellous precision, 35 yard passes straight to the foot of a team mate.

This 20-year-old paragon is called Michel Platini, grandson of an Italian, and he actually plays inside-left, second striker, for his one and only club, Nancy: having made his debut for them at 17. He says this is where he prefers to play but if Michel Hidalgo, our new selector, wants to push him up to centre-forward, then he will have no objection.

His father was once a player himself, and it was the fact that he had played side by side with Nancy's chief scout which was instrumental in young Michel joining Nancy, when so many clubs were pursuing him. Now Platini *père* has moved to Nancy to look after the juniors, and to be near Michel. The young striker has an excellent right footed shot, and almost as good a shot with his left, jumps splendidly, heads well and dribbles, one critic wrote, "as cuttingly as the blade of a knife."

Unlike Serge Chiesa, it does at least look as if Platini *wants* to play for France. He did not get capped by the juniors, missing a game through injury, then being ignored, but he has been turning out for the Under 23 team with success, and his temperament seems excellent, as relaxed as that of the other great 20-year-old hope (who is perhaps now a little more than that) Dominique Bathenay. Michel Hidalgo clearly hopes that this is the man whose goals will rout Eire and Bulgaria in the World Cup qualifying competition. Chiesa, by the way, has been in thrilling form for Lyon, and has been running neck and neck with Platini and Bianchi for the leadership of the League's goal scorers; though none of them has been as prolific as Laurent Pokou in the Second Division. By the time Rennes had to play (and lose) their 15th match at Fontainebleau without him, the splendid Ivory Coast centre-forward had scored no fewer than seventeen times. But a week earlier he'd had a two hour operation, which means a long sad absence.

Early sprint

Curioni of Metz is another who has been setting a hot pace as a goalscorer, his 11 goals in the first 17 games having much to do with the fact that Metz were then sitting on the heels of Nice at the top of the League. Nice, despite the marvellous do or die goals by the omnicompetent Josip Katalinski, failed to keep up their killing early sprint.

Metz are a team without any major star, with the possible exception of their Luxemburg international striker Braun, of whom England will have to beware when the World Cup qualifying games come around. He, Curioni and the young right flanker Debon form a most effective spearhead.

A propos of Nice, their Yugoslav manager Markovic, himself once his country's World Cup centre-half, has made some strange tactical decisions with his two key men. Thus, when the ship was sinking at Lyon, he pushed Katalinski up into the attack — and Guillou back from midfield into the defence, as stopper!

So Katalinski roamed around like a bull on the loose, but there was nobody, in Guillou's absence, to give him the ball! Guillou, a distinguished late developer, now nigh on 30, is known to fancy the position of centre-back, just as Beckenbauer wanted to move from the midfield to the shelter of sweeper. Guillou showed that his immense skill, his splendid side footed passes, would make him an outstanding centre-half, but that is hardly what Nice bought him for.

We had an interesting day of experiments in Monaco some weeks ago when, under the aegis of UEFA, three new rules were tried out; the Sin Bin, or the sending off of a cautioned player for ten minutes, no offside on free kicks, short corners, from the edge of the penalty box, whenever the corner was conceded in the area between the edge of the box and the goalpost nearer to it.

The results seemed fairly promising except in the second case since, as you might have expected, ruling out offside at free kicks simply meant that more defenders crowded back into the goal area. Stefan Kovacs, in his last days then as team manager of the French national side, said he thought ten minutes was too long to keep a player off, though he was all for the short corner, which he had been supporting, he said, for some years past.

One good point he made about the ten minute expulsion was that it was too long, in the sense that it was physically dangerous to the player. His muscles would get cold and contract, so that he would run the risk of injury when he did return to the field. He was not against the idea in principle, but would prefer the time to be reduced to five minutes. Michel Hidalgo, his successor, was equally enthusiastic about the mini-corner, and said he approved too of the temporary expulsion. Raymond Gorthals, Belgium's team manager, liked the short corners but saw no value in the suppression of offside at free kicks, and had grave doubts about the temporary expulsion. He felt it would give too much power to referees and that their interpretation would tend to be uneven.

Roger Magnusson is playing again; and in Paris. The famous Swedish international right winger, of the powerful stride and the fine swerve, not to mention the crisp acceleration, once with Juventus and Marseille, has been turning out for Red Star of Paris in the Second Division and with much success; though he made no secret of the fact that his chief interest was in his benefit match on January 11, after which he wanted to go back to Sweden. Needless to say Red Star's directors, after his fine performances, the easy way he fitted in to team and club, had other ideas. Magnusson has not had a lucky career — all those years when Juventus owned him but couldn't use him, obliging him to wander Europe — but at least it is a long lasting one.

And now, let the best come last, the best being the extraordinary victory of our young Olympic team, inspired by none other than Michel Platini, against the powerful, far more experienced and immeasurably more professional Rumanian Olympic XI; which included established full internationals of the calibre of Mircea Lucescu, former World Cup captain, and Georgescy.

A score of 4-0 was the margin of our splendid success at Blois. The cream of the jest was that Kovacs himself should be at Blois . . . in his capacity of newly installed, or reinstated, Rumanian national team manager.

So France go to the Montreal Olympics, as they went, with such success and distinction, to the Mexican Olympics, where Mexico themselves were beaten. A special bouquet for their veteran team manager, Gaby Robert, one of those who have established the family atmosphere which characterises our Olympic selections. It is this splendid team spirit, rather than any individual excellence — though good players abound — which has given the French Olympic side such success through the years, and which now brings it to Canada at the expense of a far more experienced, more highly quoted, opponent.

Victory over Turkey brings sigh of relief

West German newsletter from Arthur Rotmil

THE GERMAN national team ended the old year with a resounding 5-0 away win over Turkey. This success could not have been better timed, for the soccer experts and the fans alike were beginning to voice serious doubts whether the programme of rebuilding, following the triumph in the World Cup and the retirement of several leading figures, was progressing on the right lines.

In the spring the Germans will be defending their title of European champions, but will later miss the competitive qualifying matches for the 1978 World Cup, since as holders they are automatically placed in the final series in Argentina.

Success

Thus, now is the time for the new side to develop understanding, confidence and moral strength in the decisive phase of the European Championship. In this light, the friendly encounter with Turkey in Istanbul, just before Christmas, at the time when the *Bundesliga* enjoyed a brief pause, provided manager Helmut Schön with an opportunity to give another chance to several men who did well in the last match against Bulgaria, but at the same time he tested a trio of newcomers with great success.

For the injured goalkeeper Sepp Maier, that fine Hamburg goalkeeper Rudi Kargus (23) made his début. A quarter-of-an-hour from the end Peter Reichel, 24 (Eintracht Frankfurt), came in for Dietz, but the most significant entry was made by centre forward Ronnie Worm (Duisburg). This 22-year-old striker scored twice, although he only came in at half time, in place of Stielike, for whom Beer dropped back into midfield.

Before a crowd of 25,000 in pouring rain and on a heavy ground, the Germans proved superior in all aspects of the game and with any luck might have scored more than the five goals. Considering that just four weeks earlier the Turks beat Russia, in a European Championship tie 1-0, and these Soviets are rated by many as the best national side in Europe, this easy German victory has indeed surprised the experts. The Turkish crowd were most generous in their applause for the smooth moving visitors who struck great form and were superbly led by Franz Beckenbauer (playing his 95th international) in a far more attacking role than in recent matches.

Deserved

After Heynckes (19) and Bee (25) gave the Germans a deserved half-time lead, in came Ronnie Worm who first scored a fine goal and then, after Beckenbauer's penalty was parried by the 'keeper, he was quickly off the mark to put the ball in the net. Jupp Heynckes completed the scoring with his 11th international goal.

It was Germany's highest win since April 17, 1974, when they beat Hungary, also by 5-0. Now the question is: Can Worm fill the void at last, at centre forward? No fewer than seven (!) central strikers have been tried since the voluntary retirement of the great Gerd Müller, but all without success.

In the *Bundesliga* the customary short mid-winter break came at the half way mark, when Borussia Mönchengladbach established a useful four-point lead and looking by far the best team in the land appear set to retain the title.

A measure of the current strength of the champions can be gauged from the fact that in the 20-man squad picked for the international versus Turkey, there were no less than seven stars from Gladbach! On their heels in the *Bundesliga* were Eintracht Brunswick, Hamburger SV and surprisingly Kaiserslautern.

The interest in the championship has again exceeded expectations, for the gates rose by a staggering 600,000, as compared with last season. A total of 3,795,726 spectators visited the 153 games, for an average of 24,809 per match. This represents the second highest gates since the foundation of the *Bundesliga*. (Previous best in 1965 with an average of 25,909).

Brilliant

The highest average attendances were registered by Schalke who drew 40,285 per game, followed by Hamburger SV (38,725), Hannover (35,345), Karlsruher SC (34,381), Bayern Munich (34,339) and Hertha Berlin (30,934). The champions Borussia Mg., who have one of the smallest grounds, averaged only 22,410, but their brilliant team proved the most popular visitors, playing invariably to packed houses away from home!

Most of the top clubs are cashing in on this boom and several of them were able to report substantial profits. Hamburger SV, whose total receipts during the last financial year rose from five million Marks (£850,000) to 8,3 million Marks (£1,4m), made a clear profit of £180,000 — a record in the 88-year history of the club.

In the current season Hamburg already turned over £850,000, so it looks like another bumper year, moreover as they are still engaged in the UEFA Cup. And Hertha Berlin managed miraculously, since 1974, to wipe out completely a deficit of over £1 million! At the end of the past year (1975), the treasurer reported proudly that the Berliners had now a credit of some £10,000!

The latest bonanza is being experienced by Cologne, who at last moved from their old Müngersdorfer Radrenn-

Injured West German goalkeeper Sepp Maier (second from right) watches his country beat Turkey 5-0.

bahn (capacity 28,500) to the brand new stadium which can hold 61,188. There are 27,894 seats and room for 33,186 standing, plus 108 seats for V.I.P.'s. This is in fact the first stadium in Germany completely under cover, it is one of the most modern and beautiful in Europe and it cost over seven million Pounds.

Cologne was earmarked as one of the World Cup venues for 1974, but the City Council then refused to release funds, necessary for a new ground to be owned by the municipality. Now, more than a year later, this magnificent football arena was ceremoniously opened on November 12, with the local derby FC Cologne v. Fortuna (3-0), before an audience of 52,000. And a capacity crowd of over 61,000 saw the last championship match before the break, Cologne v. Borussia Mönchengladbach (0-4).

Other interesting statistics: In the first half of the season 504 goals were scored — last year's figure of 521 was the highest on record. There were 56 penalties, of which 37 were converted, 9 missed and 10 saved. The highest wins were achieved in each case by Eintracht Frankfurt, the cup holders, who beat both VfL Bochum and Bayern Munich 6-0! There have been four sendings off. These clubs occupied the top spot so far: Borussia Mönchengladbach ten times, Eintracht Brunswick four times, Hamburger SV, Eintracht Frankfurt, Schalke and Werder Bremen once each.

Sandwiched between the last *Bundesliga* round and the international was the Third Round of the DFB Cup, which saw at last the long awaited return of the great Gerd Müller who was out of action since September. Next to him Bayern were able to field from the start the also for a long time injured Uli Hoeness and Johnny Hansen. Before 12,000 fans, in the Munich Olympic stadium, Bayern beat Tennis Borussia Berlin by 3-0, with Müller scoring his "customary" goal, the others coming from Torstensson and Rummenigge.

Controversial

The biggest surprise was Eintracht's Brunswick's 2-1 win at Gelsenkirchen, over Schalke, who up till then were unbeaten at home. The bitterly disappointed crowd demanded the resignation of Schalke's controversial manager Max Merkel.

The best match was seen in Duisburg, where the League leaders Borussia Mg. were the visitors. 32,000 fans were treated to a winning goal from the popular Berti Vogts, his first of the season, which gave Borussia victory, but Duisburg were desperately unlucky, hitting the woodwork three times, while international defender Dietz even missed a penalty!

A missed spot kick also led to the high scoring 4-4 draw between Fortuna Düsseldorf and VfL Bochum, which had to be repeated and was won by Fortuna 3-1 a.e.t. The holders Eintracht Frankfurt had a relatively easy 3-0 win over VfL Osnabruck, whose goalkeeper Werner Kamper prevented a runaway win. Rather disappointing were the gates, a total of 153,700 giving an average of just 9,600 per match.

There was a scare for Bayern, when their two famous internationals, 'keeper Sepp Maier and Uli Hoeness, were involved in a car accident. On their way back from the *Bundesliga* match in Berlin, Maier's car burst a tyre and scraped against two trees, alongside the motorway. The vehicle was a total write off, but the two players were unharmed!

The Munich club incidentally ended their long search for a new striker by signing Rainer Künkel from the Second Division club SV Darmstadt. This 25-year-old, who with 16 goals leads the scorers list in Div. 2, cost Bayern only £50,000 and they will also play a friendly in Darmstadt, without a fee. In addition, the club have now decided to retain their Swedish forward Conny Torstensson, whose transfer to the Swiss club Young Boys of Berne was called off. But Klaus Wunder (25), was sold to Hannover for £80,000, and from now until July, no player can be signed in the *Bundesliga*.

INTERNATIONAL MICROSCOPE
by ERIC BATTY

Superstars are missing

IN THE international arena, the Bulgarian game really came of age between the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne and the 1962 World Cup when they fought their way through the qualifying stages for the first time. Since then they have qualified for every series, but once in the last 16 they have consistently disappointed their fans.

That team of 1956-62 was technically a very gifted one with right half Stefan Bojkov and inside left Ivan Kolev the main springs at a time when 4-2-4 was the accepted way to play. Kolev stood out particularly with an elegant left foot and intelligence to match. At his best he looked for all the world a mini-Puskas but like his colleagues, Kolev whose record 75 caps (and 25 international goals) stood for many years until Dimitr Penev topped it in 1973-74, lacked the physical condition to do battle with the super class teams.

Since then the Bulgarians have improved the physical qualities within their game so that now they can match most sides. The problem today is that they lack the really top drawer type of player, without which no side can be complete. They have good players, but where it counts (in attack), today's side includes only Christo Bonev who has ever stood out in the best company.

Alongside Bonev in midfield, Bojil Kolev has often been the mainstay of the side, a hard-working, enthusiastic type of player who never gives up as his knack of going forward to score vital goals at critical moments shows. But he lacks the class of a top-liner and in attack the Bulgarians have tried a string of players, many of whom do well in the domestic game but have failed to rise to the occasion at international level.

The Bulgarians themselves are very aware of what they lack. Talking not long ago with some Bulgarian coaches, I recalled a superb move following a free kick I had seen against Peru in the 1970 World Cup that involved three players and four moves. "That," I was told with a wry smile, was the only thing the Bulgarians had tried that had ever worked out . . . the peak of their achievements to date."

That may be how they see it through their disappointed eyes but to be fair the Bulgarian game at one stage threatened to break through. Over the years they've had quality players in Kolev and Bojkov, Asparoukhov, Yakimov and Bonev. Unhapoily, to be a super team one needs to have at least four, preferably five such players at one time. They have failed so far but they have come desperately close and but for two tragic accidents they could conceivably have had at least a crack at the top football nations.

This was around the time of their second visit to Wembley — the first had been to play Great Britain's amateurs in the Olympics — and it brought them a morale boosting 1-1 draw against the full England side. In a useful all round side, two figures stood out: goalkeeper Simeon Simeonov and centre forward Georgi Asparoukhov, known to the fans as Gundi. Simeonov had a great game in goal, pulling off several saves that only a real craftsman at the height of his form could produce while at the other end, Asparoukhov was a constant menace. Fittingly it was Asparoukhov who scored the Bulgarian goal, ghosting past Jack Charlton, just inside the England half and running on almost half the length of the field to slip the ball into the net as the 'keeper came out.

Tragically, when the 1966 World Cup came round they had neither Simeonov head injuries in a traffic accident in Sofia and out of the game — nor Asparoukhov . . . killed on the way to a match when his car collided with a truck.

	P	W	D	L	Goals F.	Goals A
Albania	4	1	1	2	4.	5
Algeria	1	0	0	1	1.	2
Argentina	1	0	0	1	0.	1
Austria	4	0	1	3	2.	15
Belgium	5	3	0	2	9.	11
Brazil	4	0	0	4	1.	10
Croatia	1	0	0	1	0.	6
Cyprus	4	4	0	0	13.	1
Czechoslovakia	11	5	2	4	12.	13
Denmark	2	1	1	0	3.	2
England	3	0	2	1	1.	2
Egypt	4	2	1	1	6.	4
Finland	2	2	0	0	5.	1
France	12	5	2	5	15.	23
Germany, East	9	4	4	1	13.	7
Germany, West	13	3	1	9	12.	35
Greece	18	9	5	4	35.	31
Holland	5	2	1	2	9.	11
Hungary	17	2	4	11	16.	49
India	1	1	0	0	3.	0
Ireland, North	2	1	1	0	3.	0
Ireland, Republic	1	0	0	1	0.	1
Israel	2	2	0	0	6.	1
Italy	6	1	3	2	5.	11
Korea, North	2	2	0	0	6.	1
Latvia	1	1	0	0	3.	0
Libya	1	1	0	0	3.	2
Luxembourg	2	2	0	0	5.	2
Malta	1	1	0	0	5.	0
Mexico	2	0	1	1	1.	3
Morocco	2	0	1	1	1.	4
Norway	6	4	2	0	18.	5
Peru	3	1	0	2	8.	9
Poland	16	4	7	5	22.	27
Portugal	8	4	2	2	10.	10
Rumania	21	5	4	12	33.	50
Slovakia	1	0	0	1	1.	4
Spain	1	0	0	1	0.	13
Sweden	3	2	1	0	5.	0
Turkey	10	5	3	2	21.	13
Uruguay	1	0	1	0	1.	1
USSR	12	1	6	5	10.	17
Yugoslavia	22	6	4	12	39.	50
Totals	247	87	61	99	366.	453

By this time Dimiter Yakimov, the inside left, had emerged as the number one player, even outshining Pele when Brazil and Bulgaria met in the World Cup in Liverpool. Had Simeonov and Asparoukhov still been around, and with Yakimov close to his peak, it is quite conceivable that the Bulgarians could have made a real name for themselves.

Petar Jekov, who replaced Asparoukhov, scored a lot of league goals but by comparison with the graceful Asparoukhov, who had every quality, Jekov looked a mere tank.

Bulgarian experts who see their side regularly may disagree but for me, a rover who tries to see as much as possible of everyone and inevitably cannot see everything, that 1-1 side at Wembley was the Bulgarian's peak to date.

Right now the Bulgarians have two quite separate problems. The first is up to clubs like Levski-Spartak and CSKA to find and develop the highly skilled, reliable goalscoring strikers they so desperately need. The second is a problem common to most East European sides who are desperately short of match practice against the elite of the western professional game. One will be no good without the other, for experience and big match temperament are as vital as talent.

The authorities in Sofia clearly know their own shortcomings but the fact still remains that of their international matches played to date, more than a quarter have been against their neighbours, Greece, Yogoslavia and Rumania. Such games will test any promising youngsters they find, but like Christo Bonev who is the star of the current crop of players, they have to be thrown out into the wide world to really prove themselves.

KEIR RADNEDGE on ITALY

Dismissal for Suarez at Cagliari

IT'S EASY to be snide about football, and particularly to be snide about the intrigues of Calcio. But where else would a man like Luis Suarez get the sack for the second time in six months and be granted so little sympathy?

I hinted at his dismissal last month. Cagliari, just like Inter before them, had published a vote of confidence in their coach and that just had to be the danger sign.

The last straw was a 2-1 defeat away to Sampdoria which left Cagliari, champions in 1970 under Manlio Scopigno, more firmly entrenched at the foot of the table. Already it was known that the club had approached Gustavo Giagnoni, late of Milan, to take over, with Suarez staying as second-in-command. But this plan met trouble when it was pointed out that no manager may coach two teams in the same season.

Cagliari protested to the league that Giagnoni had left Milan under unusual circumstances — the Gianni Rivera takeover — but made no headway and had to name former defender Mario Tiddia as caretaker with Suarez being pitched out on his ear.

Suarez played 37 times for Spain and was the inspiration of the 1964 Nations' Cup success. He was the indispensible midfield general of Inter in the mid-sixties and who knows what might have happened had he not been unfit when they faced Celtic in the 1967 Champions' Cup Final?

As he slowed down he went to Sampdoria and the last time I saw him playing was in an Anglo-Italian Cup match at Birmingham. All the pace was gone, all the craft remained.

Hiatus

Luisito started his present career as an assistant coach at Genoa and then was seized on — much too soon — by Ivanoe Fraizzoli as the prospective saviour of Inter. Few ex-players have ever succeeded as manager of a team containing men they played alongside. Suarez might have done well given time, but the big Italian clubs can't afford the hiatus. One season and he was gone.

Now he's out again, but at least he's taken this tumble far more philosophically. "It's usual", he said, "both in Italy and Spain, that when things aren't going well for the team, the manager has to pay the price. What went wrong? Our bad results, obviously. In fact, though, we didn't have the luck when the fixtures were sorted out. The first matches were all against much stronger teams. We were being beaten away and held at home and so . . . they changed the manager.

"No one likes to lose, of course, so when something like this happens there's not much you can do but accept it gracefully."

What is contradictory about Cagliari's plight is that Luigi Riva, now 31, is back in form after 12 months plagued by injury and very nearly made the national team for the Florence friendly with Greece. His one black mark so far has been a penalty miss in the home match against Cesena, surprise team of the season. The score was 1-1 at the time — Riva having already scored — but the visitors went on to win 2-1.

Lacking Riva, interest in the Greece match centred on the performance of 22-year-old Gaetano Scirea, from Juventus, as sweeper in place of Giacinto Facchetti, whose phasing-out I forecast here last month.

Scirea had previously played a couple of times for the under-23s, but his only senior appearance had been in the thrashing of the United States last spring, when he played 45 minutes.

At least Scirea earned this chance against Greece on merit — his previous steps up the soccer ladder owed much to other people's misfortunes.

An inside forward originally with the Atalanta youth teams, he was switched to sweeper when the regular incumbent broke a leg, and made the senior side when first choice Giancarlo Savoia broke an arm! That was in 1972.

"I accepted the position very grudgingly at first', said Scirea. "I wanted to run, to keep up with the play, and as sweeper I felt I was being put to one side. Instead it's made my fortune."

Scirea was the youngster Carlo Parola chose to take over from veteran Sandro Salvadore for *La Vecchia Signora*, and now it's Facchetti who moves aside in the *Azzurri*. Scirea is mobile and quick and he likes to go forward — an adventurous trait which still divides the fans. Against Greece, Fulvio Bernardini and Enzo Bearzot put out a team with two attacking full backs in Claudio Gentile and Francesco Rocca — and it's a moot point whether Italy can afford all three.

The game itself was soured for the neutrals by the unhappy refereeing of the Yugoslav, Milo Kajic. The Greeks were upset when Paolino Pulici found the net in the third minute of first half injury time, and then again at the penalty which Beppe Savoldi converted in the second half to bring about the 3-2 victory.

Pulici got the other Italian goal (six minutes) and Kritikopoulous (36) and Serafis (53) scored for Greece.

The Italians, who tend to throw in substitutes unlimited in these friendlies, restricted themselves to one half-time switch — Renato Zaccarelli for Romeo Benetti. It was a deserved opportunity for the 24-year-old who has had so much to do with the Torino renaissance under Gigi Radice, the former Milan wing half who moved from Cagliari in the summer.

We'll delve into the Torino recovery at some later stage. Suffice for now to mention that excellent 2-1 victory away to Milan, coached of course by Radice's old team-mate, Giovanni Trapattoni.

Milan, without Rivera, went 1-0 down to Zaccarelli after 16 minutes, and though Aldo Maldera equalised after 51, Franco Graziani stole all the thunder with a fine header six minutes from time. It was Torino's first victory in San Siro for 21 years!

But if Italian soccer is starting at last to look to its young men, the veterans still have plenty to say for themselves. It was Facchetti who sneaked upfield to give Inter the last-kick 2-1 win over title contenders Napoli and goalkeeper Ricky Albertosi who kept Florentina out after Luciano Chiarugi — another Florentine exile — had scored the goal which brought Milan a rare away victory. Rivera, recovering slowly from a mystery back injury, sat the match out among the substitutes and lost a little more ground in the career appearance stakes.

Rivera's played 446 games, while Tarcisio Burgnich and Jose Altafini both recently topped 450. Burgnich's career began with Udinese, and progressed via Juventus, Palermo, Inter and Napoli. The Brazilian has a mere three clubs behind him — Milan, Napoli and Juventus — and the more games he plays, the more Juve will be pleased.

A spectacular save by Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Corrigan.

Money on City

A KNOWLEDGEABLE soccer friend has just accepted the odds for a bet which may not have to be honoured either by himself or the bookie until the very last day of the season.

A much-travelled Londoner, he constantly studies the form charts, watches most of the top teams throughout the winter, and now firmly believes that Manchester City is in with the best chance of picking up at least one of the big prizes between now and the end of May.

This appears to be such an interesting challenge to the countless possibilities that I have been doing my homework, examining personal memories and records to discover the real strength for such an opinion.

Let's remember, right at the start, that we are dealing here with a most unusual club. One that has probably gone up and down on the escalator between the top divisions of the English League more than any other, though never dodging generous helpings of humble pie in the process.

The better side of this picture reveals the remarkable fact that one or other of the game's major prizes — the League championship, the FA Cup, the League Cup, or a European Cup — has usually landed every few years on the trophy-laden sideboard at the famous Maine Road ground, which still boasts the provincial record of 84,560.

I don't think there have been greater players anywhere. Between the wars, for instance, they had such as Billy Meredith, Peter Doherty, Eric Brook, Frank Swift, Jimmy McMullan, Bert Sproston, Freddie Tilson, Matt Busby, Jackie Bray and Tommy Johnson, all internationals.

During the last three decades, the list of capped stars has also included Andy Black, Ivor Broadis, Don Revie, Roy Paul, Bobby Johnstone, Derek Kevan, Eddie McMorran, Bill McAdams, Clifford Sear, Frank McCourt, Jackie Plenderleith, Johnny Crossan, Roy Clarke, Denis Law, Mike Summerbee, Francis Lee, Colin Bell, Rodney Marsh, Dennis Tuert, Dave Watson, Asa Hartford, Joe Royle, and Willie Donachie.

Employed

And managers? Ah! That's a delicate point. Because Manchester City have had no less than TEN in a mere thirty seasons. Wilfred Wild was quickly followed by Sam Cowan, Jock Thomson, Leslie McDowall, George Poyser, Joe Mercer, Malcolm Allison, Ron Saunders, Johnny Hart and Tony Book.

What have we today? A completely new set-up. Anybody who has not visited Moss Side since the last title triumph eight years ago, would hardly know a soul. Chairman Peter Swales was not even on the board at that time, being otherwise employed guiding the new Northern Premier League through its teething troubles.

It's not that the place required a new broom, but rather that folk with different and more modern ideas moved in. Mercer schemed the first changes. Now, Book is in the appointed place, and doing very well, thank you.

He is a man who made a late entry into the full professional game while bricklaying in the West of England, and is now nicely installed in the Corridors of Power with a sizeable cheque book always available.

Already, some big ones have been paid out though, at the same time, dealings in a sellers' market have gone quite a long way towards balancing the account and keeping the bank manager happy.

They bought Tuert, Hartford, Royle, Watson and Marsh for just over £1m but recouped more than half with the departures of Lee, Tony Towers, Derek Jeffries, and Frank Carrodus.

Now, they are fighting for an award, and certainly seem to possess the playing strength to see them through to a right conclusion if only Dame Fortune provides a slice of the necessary.

England manager Don Revie, a member of City's Old Boys Union, believes they are one of six who could finish on the summit. Many club bosses also say the final stages of the championship race will be contested between Liverpool, Leeds, Queen's Park Rangers, Derby, Manchester United and City.

No opinions are being advanced about the other prizes. So we shall see.

ERIC THORNTON'S SOCCER NOTEBOOK

STOKOE NOW ON SUMMIT

THE NAME will always indicate a combination of toughness and experience. For it identifies a man whose remarkable switch-back career in English soccer has variously translated him from the bottom rung to the summit in recurring fashion.

It's also a fact that ever since Bob Stokoe, now Lord of all Sunderland, first came on the scene the sport has benefited, though sometimes been rather shaken by the fantastic energy and comments born of the native heath of the Northumbrian village of Mickley, where the folk dislike veneer of any kind.

His entry as a teenager with both eyes fixed firmly on the stars, was unpropitious and completely unheralded. And somewhat naturally, too, because during that era Newcastle United boasted of such artists as George Robledo, Frank Brennan, Jackie Milburn, Joe Harvey, Bobby Mitchell and many others.

They were the big shots. Bob was merely a raw apprentice contesting spots with The Stiffs in the Second and Third teams. He couldn't even beat the First team boys on the tables after training spells, and was often stripped at snooker.

Statue

But time passed, as it always does. The stature gradually improved until the budding wing-half began knocking at the door, and made a long-awaited and promising debut — at centre-forward, and on a Christmas Day, if you please!

Just a few years later there was a Cup winner's medal to provide permanent remembrances of a Wembley halfback role played between the redoubtable Scottish international Jimmy Scoular and the Irish international Tom Casey. It was reputed to be one of the strongest intermediate lines in the country at that particular period.

Then came the managerial circuit, with halts at Bury, Charlton, Rochdale, Carlisle and Blackpool, while all the time the six-footer was thinking of life in his beloved north-east. So you can guess there was no hesitancy when Sunderland offered their top job, and had to pay a transfer fee of £12,000 for his immediate release.

That was three years ago. Since then the Roker fans have had more than their fair share of excitement which was often very good, though at other times not quite so good because of the frustration felt while awaiting a return to the First Division.

They had looked a good bet for a spot in the Third when he took charge of this club which always used to proclaim on every home programme that it had never been out of the top circle — until its turn came in 1958.

Bob soon pushed that dreaded spectre of the Third Division into the background, then proceeded to employ his own particular ability to motivate the players. And to such amazing purpose that Sunderland swept through to Wembley against all the odds.

Everybody wanted to treat everybody else in that busy coastal town, and the friendly, generous spirit continued throughout the summer. Then it began to fade just as dramatically when their heroes lost touch with success the following season, and slithered down the league while going eight games without achieving a solitary result.

Problems

Additionally, the team failed to take its first Cup hurdle the next time round, and as the prospects of a battle for promotion slowly evaporated the boss became encircled with disappointed players, and there were various problems to be solved.

He talked about rebuilding, obviously recognising that the squad lacked the necessary all-round ability. The playing staff was gradually, though slowly, remodelled, until today we have a team which the smart boys fancy to go up.

In the interim, Mister Stokoe has cleverly manoeuvred the market, and shown a profit on dealing. For after pocketing £275,000 for Dennis Tuert, and a further £175,000 for Dave Watson, bought Mel Holden and Bryan Robson for well under that joint figure.

And the wisdom of those signings proved itself in the way the Roker boys moved off to their best League start for 39 years, and then went on picking up the vital points — all of which could be a happy corollary of things to come.

Sunderland manager Bob Stokoe.

Dalnoki's youth policy working

Hungarian news ... by Leslie Vernon

PARDON MY yawns, but the Hungarian football scene has been very quiet recently. No new competitions were introduced to the unsuspecting public, no five-a-side tournaments on Christmas Day, or even a compulsory cross-country race at the crack of dawn to welcome the New Year in.

In fact, the last Cup Final (not counting the indoor tournaments at various provincial venues) was played as long ago as December 15, when Ferencvaros met Ujpest Dozsa in the Winter Cup. I trust you remember that this was the tourney devised to give younger players an opportunity to show-off their talents. As the teams were restricted to field only three over-23-year olds, the idea worked out pretty well, and 10,000 people turned-up at a small ground (BVK Elore Stadium) to witness a relatively easy Fradi triumph.

The outcome wasn't totally unexpected as the green-and-whites fielded practically their best eleven, with Balint and Branikovits representing the older generation.

Dozsa, on the other hand, lined-up with several boys who hadn't yet played in the league, and their experienced elders were Horvath and Harsanyi, the centre-back pair.

Harsanyi scored the opening goal *a la* Beckenbauer, breaking from the back and cutting through the Fradi defence. Szabo equalised before the break, and the same player netted twice in the second half and Nyilasi, once. Szabo's treble wasn't considered a hat-trick — in Hungary this accolade is only given to players who score three consecutive goals in a match.

What is more significant is that the names of Szabo and Nyilasi should be so familiar to the public, while from the Dozsa forward trio, only Fekete can be considered an established first-teamer.

Dalnoki's youth policy has certainly justified itself. Even an old neutral like myself cannot help hoping that he'll eventually build a truly great side in the reconstructed stadium at Ulloi-Ut!

So 4-1 to Fradi in the Final, and Videoton drew with Kaposvar 2-2 in the third place play-off, but won the obligatory penalty competition 5-4. Only one managerial head rolled in the snow before the winter hibernation. Imre Kovacs, ex-manager of Dozsa, resigned at MTK-VM, and the job went to Mihaly Keszthelyi on a temporary basis.

Kovacs, in his playing days, was a brilliant wing-half with MTK, a truly artistic ball player, who would have been capped regularly if he hadn't been the contemporary of the incomparable Bozsik. Kovacs played eight times for Hungary, while Jozsef Bozsik pulled on the national short a record 100 times!

As 'Cucu' — as Bozsik was known to one and all during his magnificent career — has recently celebrated his 50th birthday, a small (or even a large) tribute to him here wouldn't be inappropriate. He made his international debut in 1947, and the last of his appearances was fifteen years (!) later in 1962.

Although he scored only 11 goals — one of them at Wembley— his contribution to the team was unique. In the early days, he was satisfied to play an orthodox wing-half-role, but as the "wonder team" began to develop, the stature and vision of Bozsik grew visibly match-by-match.

Partnership

He had a marvellous Olympic Tournament in Helsinki, when Hungary won the title, and then formed a great ball-playing partnership with Nandor Hidegkuti. As Hungary was playing 4-2-4 before anyone else thought of it, this dark-haired, quiet pass-master in the No. 4 shirt, and Hidegkuti, masquerading as a withdrawn centre-forward in the No. 9 jersey, launched attack after attack with through-balls of such precision, incisiveness and delicacy, that the forwards were constantly a step ahead of the defence.

"When Cucu had the ball," Puskas used to say, "I started my run and was certain that the ball would drop at my feet, beating the defence. He was the greatest wing-half of all time." When I think of Bozsik, I often compare him with Gerson or Danny Blanchflower — players in a similar mould.

But Cucu, who also played nearly 600 games for Honved, lasted the longest!

Despite earlier controversy, it has now been accepted as a fact, that "official" football in Hungary began in 1901. Consequently, the FA celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, and a series of events are planned to mark the occasion. There will be a special Congress on June 12, with invited guests representing the FIFA, UEFA, IOC and various other bodies and associations.

Old internationals will be honoured, and there will be an exhibition of literature, statues, trophies, etc. On the following day, Hungary will play Austria in the Nepstadium.

A highly suitable opposition, since this will be the Magyar's 500th full-international, and the very first one was played against neighbours Austria (at that time, both countries belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire) as far back as 1901, when it all began.

Prior to the official ceremonies in late May and early June, Hungary are staging this year's UEFA Youth Tournament, which in the years when England won it, is known here as the "Little World Cup".

This will be played-off in four provincial centres, with the final stages scheduled for Budapest.

Finally, let us congratulate Laszlo Balint, the sturdy Ferencvaros defender, who has been elected as the "Player of the Year". Apart from his sterling work in the heart of his club's defence, Balint is the only player who appeared in all ten of Hungary's international matches in 1975, and was actually on the field for 900 minutes.

Altogether, 37 players were capped, 11 of them for the first time. Of the new boys, Pinter of Honved played in 7 games, and goalkeeper L. Kovacs in 5. The full list of appearances:

10 Balint.
8 J. Nagy.
7 Fazekas, Pinter.
6 L. Nagy.
5 Torok, Nyilasi, L. Kovacs, J. Horvath, A. Toth, Varadi.
4 L. Kocsis, J. Toth, Rab, Lukacs, J. Kovacs.
3 Meszaros, Pusztai, Kozma, Bene, Fekete.
2 Rothermel, E. Dunai, Branikovits, Csapo, Kolar, Muller, Magyar.
1 Megyesi, Zambo, Mate, Czeczeli, Zombori, Godan, Wollek, Pal, Mucha.

In contrast to Balin't giant contribution, his clubmate Mucha only played for 17 minutes. But the young "Discovery of the Year", Rab, did a full 360 minutes stint. The future, as they say, looks bright, but I find it difficult to forgive and forget the disappointments of the recent past.

1974

Oct 30, Wembley: England 3, Czechoslovakia 0 (European Championship)
Clemence; Madeley, Watson, Hunter, Hughes; Dobson (Brooking), Ball (1), G. Francis; Worthington (Thomas), Channon (2), Keegan.

Nov 20, Wembley: England 0, Portugal 0 (Euro-champ)
Clemence; Madeley, Watson, Hughes, Cooper (Todd); Brooking, G. Francis, Bell; Thomas, Channon, Clarke (Worthington).

1975

Mar 12, Wembley: England 2, West Germany 0 (Friendly)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Gillard; Bell (1), Ball, Hudson; Macdonald (1), Channon, Keegan.

April 16, Wembley: England 5, Cyprus 0 (Euro-champ) *
Shilton; Madeley, Watson, Todd, Beattie; Bell, Ball, Hudson; Channon (Thomas), Macdonald (5), Keegan.

May 11, Limassol: Cyprus 0, England 1 (Euro-champ)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Beattie (Hughes); Hudson, Bell; Thomas, Ball, Channon, Macdonald, Keegan (1) (Tueart).

May 17, Belfast: Northern Ireland 0, England 0 (Home Championship)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Hughes; Bell, Ball, Viljoen; Macdonald (Channon), Keegan, Tueart.

May 21, Wembley: England 2, Wales 2 (Home Champ)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Gillard; G. Francis, Ball, Viljoen; Channon (Little), Johnson (2), Thomas.

May 24, Wembley: England 5, Scotland 1 (Home Champ)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Beattie (1), Bell (1), Ball, G. Francis (2); Channon, Johnson (1), Keegan (Thomas).

Sept 3, Basle: Switzerland 1, England 2 (Friendly)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Beattie; Bell, Currie, G. Francis; Keegan (1), Johnson (Macdonald), Channon (1).

Oct 30, Bratislava: Czechoslovakia 2, England 1 (Euro-champ)
Clemence; Madeley, McFarland (Watson), Todd, Gillard; Bell, Keegan, G. Francis; Channon (1) (Thomas), Clarke, Macdonald.

Nov 19, Lisbon: Portugal 1, England 1 (Euro Champ)
Clemence; Whitworth, Watson, Todd, Beattie; G. Francis, Brooking, Madeley (Clarke); Keegan, Channon (1), Macdonald (Thomas).

Scorers: Macdonald (Newcastle) 6; Channon (Southampton) 5; Bell (Manchester City) and Johnson (Ipswich) 3; G. Francis (QPR) and Keegan (Liverpool) 2; Beattie (Ipswich) 1.

REVIE'S RECORD

SIR ALF RAMSEY was sacked as England manager on May 1, 1974. Don Revie took over on July 4.

Now, despite the efforts of 30 players in 11 matches, six wins, four draws and *only one* defeat since, it doesn't look as if England are any further forward. And, in the wake of the upsetting failure to reach the quarter finals of the European Championship, come the first signs of disillusionment.

At first Revie had seemed the obvious successor to Ramsey. In 11 years in charge at Leeds, the former England inside forward had taken the Elland Road club from near the foot of the second division to the championship twice, the FA Cup Final four times (winning once), the European Fairs Cup Final twice (winning once) and the Cup-winners' Cup Final once.

But that record has broken no ice with England's opponents and one of the first men to turn on Revie has been Arsenal's Alan Ball, with 71 caps the last survivor of the 1966 World Cup-winning team and, just a year ago, Revie's own choice for the England captaincy.

Ball accused Revie of picking the wrong players, men of tireless effort (surely like Ball himself) but lacking in flair. And he scorned the new arrangement by which Revie will be able to get his England squad together for up to a week before internationals.

England wouldn't qualify for Argentina and the 1978 World Cup like that, thought Ball, even if the training sessions lasted 70 days, let alone seven!

Revie snapped back that his training methods and team selections had proved good enough at Leeds, and advised Ball to keep quiet and concentrate on lifting Arsenal from the first division relegation zone.

When Revie took over as England manager he asked for patience. He warned that his first 18 months as England manager would be a time for experiment before the serious business of qualifying for the World Cup Finals.

When England fell short of West Germany 2½ years ago, the blame was variously laid at the doors of Poland goalkeeper Jan Tomaszewski or Bobby Moore for shattering mistakes in the 2-0 defeat in Poland, and of Norman Hunter and goalkeeper Peter Shilton for their slips in the 1-1 Wembley draw with the Poles which put England out.

This time, as Revie knows better than anyone, there can be no such excuses. It won't be easy, either. England now face Finland and Luxembourg — European soccer minnows who shouldn't provide any problems — and . . . Italy, twice world champions and once runners-up.

Revie himself saw recently at first hand, when Italian Cup winners Fiorentina beat West Ham 1-0 in London, that the Italians are discovering a new generation of young stars.

England can't say the same. There's not much wrong with the defence, but take away the 5-0 defeat of tiny Cyprus and England have scored a mere 17 goals in 10 games. It's the attack that's causing the anxiety, and there are precious few new stars around.

Unhappy

One is Duncan McKenzie, the 24-year-old who has exploded at Leeds this season after an unhappy year in the shadows after being signed for £250,000 from Nottingham Forest by Brian Clough, Revie's short-lived successor at Elland Road. McKenzie has scored 14 goals so far this season, and has improved by leaps and bounds since Don Howe, who coached Arsenal to the League and Cup double in 1971, took over recently as Leeds trainer.

Then there is Trevor Francis, Birmingham City's brilliant 21-year-old. Francis made his first team debut at 16, scored some brilliant goals and earned the nickname of "Superboy". His potential is immense, but he's been dogged by bad luck. Revie first called him into the England squad over a year ago. But a couple of days before the big moment Francis was badly injured at Bramall Lane in a match with Sheffield United.

It needed a knee operation before he was fit enough to return and then, summoned to join the under-23 team, injury forced him out again.

Injury has blunted the hopes too of another Midland star — Brian Little, the Aston Villa striker who is now recovering from a cartilage operation after making his England debut at the end of last season. He came on as substitute and made a goal in the 2-2 Wembley draw with Wales.

Revie thus has enough problems to keep him occupied.

But, in my view, his troubles began with his very first match — simply because England trounced Czechoslovakia so completely, by 3-0 at Wembley.

The date was October 30, 1974. This was England's opening match in the European Championship and against the team expected to be our closest challengers.

Revie, engaged at £20,000 a year for five years, had said on appointment that he wanted to build a club spirit among the England squad. He'd also said that he wanted full co-operation from club managers. False optimism?

● continued on page 46

EUROPEAN FOOTB OF THE YEAR IS KIEV'S OLEG BLOK

Keir Radnedge looks at the 1975 poll by FRANCE

NOW THERE'S nothing personal about this, you understand. Oleg Blokhin is a marvellous footballer and I'm sure he's going to enjoy the great future predicted.

But if ever a man won the European Footballer of the Year award on potential, then it's the Dynamo Kiev left winger.

All right, perhaps calling this slicked-haired 23-year-old a "left winger" is a bit outdated in these days of generalities like "striker", "midfielder" and "defender". But I thought it was entirely symptomatic of a year in which international soccer has merely marked time that he should win the award which *France Football* present annually.

For the past three years Blokhin has been top scorer in the Russian league, and for the past two seasons he has been chosen Footballer of the Year. For the past two years also, Kiev have won the League, but it was their *defeat* by Ararat Erevan in the Cup Final of 1973 which opened the way for their rapid progress and Blokhin's elevation to a level where UEFA president, Artemio Franchi, rates him the best player in the world.

In 1973 Kiev were beaten in that Cup Final, but qualified for the 1974-75 Cup Winners Cup since Ararat had completed the double and thus aimed for the Champions' Cup.

Kiev, of course, went right through to become the first Russian side to take a European trophy, beating Ferencvaros 3-0 in the final in Basle, with Blokhin getting two of the goals. Nor were these his first goals in the competition.

Drifting along

In the first round Kiev had beaten CSKA Sofia 1-0 home and 1-0 away. Both goals fell to Blokhin. He got another against Eintracht Frankfurt in the second round, another against PSV Eindhoven in the semi-finals.

In the final his pace and skill took Fradi apart.

This season he's been drifting along in attack in the Champions' Cup victories over Olympiakos and Akranes, and played a major role in the Super Cup defeats, away and at home, of Bayern Munich. Kiev won 1-0 in Munich and 2-0 in Russia: Blokhin got all three.

"I've never played against a man so strong in every sphere," said Georg Schwarzenbeck, who had tried to mark him. "An exceptional talent," said Dettmar Cramer. "Bayern would happily pay £200,000 for him."

Not that Blokhin is ever likely to play abroad of course. But if he could, £200,000 wouldn't be enough!

More than success in the Cup Winners Cup and the Super Cup — more even than success in the League — Blokhin has made a name for himself because, as Kiev now represent Russia at international level, he has shown us that occasionally the stereotyped Russian game can throw up a man of vision and flair.

In the past the Streltzovs, the Ivanovs, the Metrevellis and Voronins have been a rare breed. And, more often than not, their own star quality has brought their downfall within the Russian system. Like it or not, Blokhin is now a star.

Not that his mother ever wanted him to take up soccer. She was a Ukraine national sprint champion, and she wanted her son to stick to athletics. Vladimir Petrovski, trainer of Olympic champion Valeri Borzov, thought that was where Blokhin's future lay, too.

Blokhin didn't. As a youngster he won many races, but he preferred something a little more unpredictable than a career racing against the clock. He made his debut for Kiev when he was 18, and in 1972 was scoring six goals for Russia in the Olympic tournament in Munich — while Borzov, of course, was winning a double-gold on the track!

Emerged too late

That tournament saw Blokhin's debut for Russia — he'd emerged just too late for the team beaten in the European Championship by the West Germans in Brussels.

In 1974 Kiev achieved the double in Russia, but this last season, though they walked away with the championship again, Dynamo Tblissi ended their chances of keeping the Cup, winning in extra time in the quarter finals.

Kiev now have two aims — to win the Champions Cup, which they may very well do; and win the European Championship. There's always the danger they could fall between two stools but they won't be worried about Blokhin being marked even closer than ever. They've plenty of talented players to use the extra space.

Blokhin himself comes in for some pretty rough treatment. Once only he allowed himself to be provoked into retaliation. He was sent off. Now when he's fouled, it just makes him more determined to take revenge through his speed and fine shot.

If only more players would follow his lead!

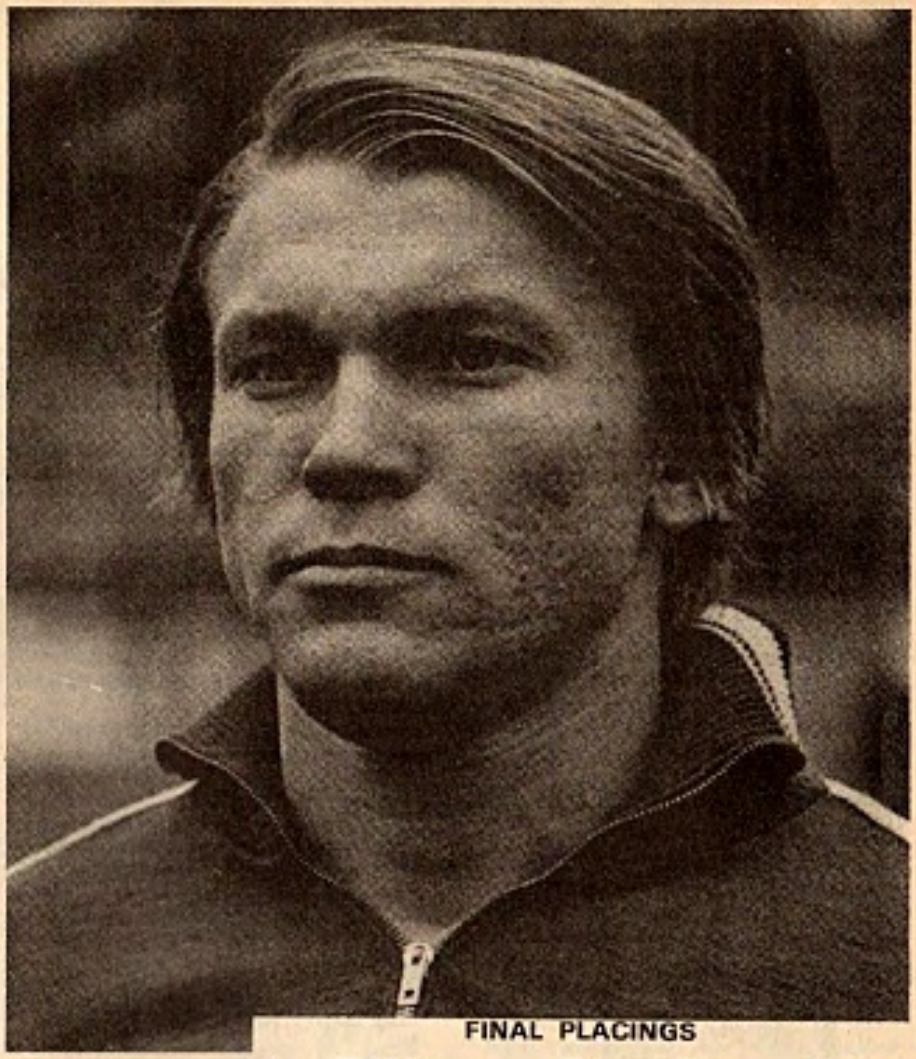
He's not the first Russian to win the award as European Footballer of the Year. The great Lev Yashin beat him to it in 1963, and it was a goalkeeper many people fancied to take the title this year — Sepp Maier.

Instead he finished fifth, with the much-titled Franz Beckenbauer, Johan Cruyff and Berti Vogts finishing at two, three and four. Cruyff, the only man ever to have won the title three times, had a very disappointing year, meeting defeat in the Champions' Cup, and Spanish League and Cup. It's his past record which put him so high. At least Franz Beckenbauer had Bayern's second Champions' Cup to back his claim.

ALLER

HIN

FOOTBALL



ALL-TIME TOP TEN

1	Cruyff	10 pts
2	Beckenbauer	8
	Di Stefano	
	Suarez	
5	Charlton	7
	Eusebio	
	Kopa	
	Müller	
9	Rivera	5
10	Best	4

THE TOP THREE OVER 20 YEARS

1956	Matthews (Blackpool)	Di Stefano (Real)	Kopa (Real)
1957	Di Stefano (Real)	Wright (Wolves)	Kopa (Real)
1958	Kopa (Real)	Rahn (R-W Essen)	Fontaine (Reims)
1959	Di Stefano (Real)	Kopa (Reims)	Charles (Juventus)
1960	Suarez (CF Barcelona)	Puskas (Real)	Seeler (Hamburg)
1961	Sivori (Juventus)	Suarez (Inter)	Haynes (Fulham)
1962	Masopust (Dukla)	Eusebio (Benfica)	Schnellinger (Köln)
1963	Yashin (Dyn. Mosc.)	Rivera (Milan)	Greaves (Spurs)
1964	Law (Man. Utd.)	Suarez (Inter)	Amancio (Real)
1965	Eusebio (Benfica)	Facchetti (Inter)	Suarez (Inter)
1966	Charlton (Man. Utd.)	Eusebio (Benfica)	Beckenbauer (Bayern)
1967	Albert (Ferencvaros)	Charlton (Man. Utd.)	Johnstone (Celtic)
1968	Best (Man. Utd.)	Charlton (Man. Utd.)	Dzajic (Partizan)
1969	Rivera (Milan)	Riva (Cagliari)	Müller (Bayern)
1970	Müller (Bayern)	Moore (West Ham)	Riva (Cagliari)
1971	Cruyff (Ajax)	Mazzola (Inter)	Best (Man. Utd.)
1972	Beckenbauer (Bayern)	Müller (Bayern)	Netzer (Borussia MG)
1973	Cruyff (CF Barcelona)	Zoff (Juventus)	Müller (Bayern)
1974	Cruyff (CF Barcelona)	Beckenbauer (Bay.)	Deyna (Leg. Warsaw)
1975	Blokhin (Dyn. Kiev)	Beckenbauer (Bay.)	Cruyff (CF Barcelona)

Still, he was a long way from Blokhin — 80 votes away. But then, defenders have a poor record generally in polls such as these. Forwards have taken the award 16 years out of 20. All the more remarkable than the fourth place of Berti Vogts, with Jupp Heynckes (seventh) underlining the emergence of Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Top Briton was Colin Todd, voted third out of five by the journalists of both Greece and Luxembourg. The Derby defender totalled 12 votes, while Leeds' Peter Lorimer gained nine, and Don Givens and Pat Jennings one each.

I said at the start that I thought Blokhin had won the title on potential, and then I proceeded to list his achievements so far. Perhaps I under-rated him. Either way, I would guess that Blokhin will have more outstanding seasons ahead of him when the title will go to someone else . . .

FINAL PLACINGS

1	Blokhin	Dynamo Kiev	122 pts
2	Beckenbauer	Bayern	42
3	Cruyff	CF Barcelona	27
4	Vogts	Borussia MG	25
5	Maier	Bayern	20
6	Geels	Ajax	18
7	Heynckes	Borussia MG	17
8	Breitner	Real Madrid	14
9	Todd	Derby	12
10	Georgescu	Din. Bucharest	11
11	Pirri	Real Madrid	9
	Lorimer	Leeds	
	Oblak	Schalke	
14	Zoff	Juventus	6
	Edstroem	PSV Eindhoven	
	Netzer	Real Madrid	
17	Katalinski	Nice	4
	Müller	Bayern	
	Lato	Stal Mielec	
	Viktor	Dukla	
	Bonev	Lok. Plovdiv	
22	Pivarnik	Slovan	3
23	Croy	Sachsenring Zw.	2
	Guillou	Nice	
	Burjak	Dynamo Kiev	
	Neeskens	CF Barcelona	
27	Givens	QPR	1
	Jennings	Tottenham	
	Simonsen	Borussia MG	
	Dzajic	Bastia	
	Facchetti	Inter	
	Alves	Boavista	

QUESTION OF PACE

by Ken Goldman

ONE OF the great attempted safety deterents which is projected at us is that "speed kills". Although this may be true in mechanical sports such as motor car or motor bike racing and to a certain extent there must be a certain extent there must be a danger from maniacal short bowling in cricket, nevertheless by and large it is only the pace of the game that we tend to find killing.

However many of the pundits tell us that English soccer is played at too fast a pace but with too little thought and skill which is in turn killing the game. It is therefore interesting to examine this idea of speed in the game and if I may be allowed the pun to confront it pace to pace.

The main factors in speedy play are timing of runs and changing pace. Single pace play is to be avoided whenever possible and one remembers Malcolm Allison on TV criticising Alan Mullery during the Mexico World Cup for being only a single pace player, an opinion the player disputed with some warmth a few weeks later in a subsequent television confrontation.

The essence of this conception is summed up by John Cartwright, Crystal Palace Youth coach, when he says. "It is necessary to be aware of pacing a run in the same way as pacing a pass. There are times when you must dwell on the ball and others when you need an explosive movement or run to exploit a situation. The worst thing in football running is one-pace running all over the park throughout the match."

This is not just speed or dogged perserverence but the ability to put in a short sprint when necessary. Indeed was not shuffling Stan Matthews always faster than the pack when it came to a short burst over 20 yards and didn't Tom Finney turn opponents inside out when it came to stopping quickly on a run and then accelerating off again.

Cliff Jones had the ability to weave and bob at speed, Eddie Gray is one of the few players still around in English football who can turn it on while those who saw George Best in his heyday, on the field, will never forget his lightning quick changes of pace and direction or quicksilver bursts of speed while twisting and feinting.

It is reputed that Johann Cruyff can cover 30 metres in 3.8 seconds from a standing start but it is not just his speed alone that makes him appear more or less the faster player around today. It is the cunning way he lulls opponents off guard for the merest fraction of time and then bursts away from them leaving them trailing in his wake.

There were countless examples of his beautiful pacy flowing style in action during the last World Cup series in Germany but one in particular where he scored a goal against Argentina will long stay in the mind's eye.

I have deliberately kept speed of thought out of this argument because some of the truly great ball playing inside forwards of yesteryear were subtle in both their thought processes and uncanny ability to thread passes almost through the eye of a needle, but on the other hand not very fast in their other movements.

Quick thinking is the kind of speed that helps pacy play but it is not necessarily inherent in it. Likewise nothing detracts from the present need to encourage speed in an era which has seen the development of less skilfully individualistic players in return for more players of all round technical ability, who often appear all to have been produced from exactly the same mould.

Summing up then speed and pace probably come down to a mixture of the quickness of the foot deceives the other guy, or it aint that you can sprint but the when, where, how, why and way that you do it, that counts.

I conclude with a further quote from John Cartwright on this topic when he says of the English game: "We tend to run too much, too fast, and too often."

Once we can solve this problem and encourage more of our players to run with variation, deception and subtlety in the same way that only the truly great players now seem to do, we really will be getting somewhere.

● continued from page 43

His one new cap to start the Czechoslovakia game was the Queens Park Rangers midfield man, Gerry Francis, a 24-year-old who is now captain of England. Revie introduced a new playing strip, adding red and blue piping to the old white jerseys, and even the match preliminaries had a Revie innovation — the fans singing the jingoistic, patriotic hymn *Land of Hope and Glory*.

Revie was clearly trying everything to get the usually icy Wembley crowd on his side. But he couldn't influence the fans as much as his team, who hit three second half goals to win easily. Another Revie masterstroke — or so it seemed — was the second half introduction of substitute Dave Thomas, the QPR winger, to liven up the attack.

The contrast couldn't have been greater with Ramsey, whose inability to master the use of substitutes probably cost England their World Cup quarter final with West Germany in Mexico in 1970.

Another contrast to the reserved Ramsey's dour reign was in Revie's description of victory. His players had been "magnificent", the crowd "great".

But that marvellous start proved too good to be true. Revie, as he had warned, chopped and changed his team in a systematic sifting of the talent around. That made for a string of disappointing results — including the 0-0 Wembley draw with Portugal, the 2-1 defeat in Czechoslovakia and the 1-1 draw with the Portuguese in Lisbon.

Ironically, Ramsey's last match had been a 0-0 draw in Portugal . . .

Revie's England went into that Lisbon game needing a win to stand any chance of reaching the last eight of the European Championship. Instead, hit by injuries suffered in the previous Saturday's League programme, Revie left for Lisbon making excuses in advance.

On the way home he hit out angrily at League secretary Alan Hardaker, who had attacked both Revie and his players, accusing them of being too highly paid to take a 'cry baby' attitude.

Volunteered

The players hit back too. Not just out of loyalty to Revie, but enraged on their own behalf. They even volunteered to play the Wembley World Cup game with Italy for nothing — with match fees and possible bonuses going to charity. Leicester full back Steve Whitworth even offered the thought that he'd gladly *pay* to play for England!

In between all these disappointing competitive games came a 2-0 Wembley win over an equally experimental West Germany. Stoke City midfield star Alan Hudson was in brilliant form. Yet he has only played once for Revie and England since . . .

The reason illustrates another of Revie's problems — team dicipline. The 'club spirit' isn't there yet. The England manager wants to make plenty of changes from one game to another to sort out his best team for the World Cup. Players, on the other hand, don't like being left out. It hurts their pride and hits their pocket.

Hudson made some careless remarks about the England set-up; Liverpool hero Kevin Keegan walked out on Revie during the Home Championship; Ipswich defender Kevin Beattie, once hailed as the new Duncan Edwards, went home rather than turn up for an international get-together.

Keegan has apologised and been welcomed back; so has the injury-prone Beattie. But Hudson, until now, has remained in the cold, and he was one of the talented outcasts Alan Ball used as an example in his outburst about Revie's methods.

Where Ball went wrong was in supposing that the League is full of stylish, skilled, unpredictable characters like Hudson. It isn't. It's no good blaming Revie, for that. But . . . the fans have been patient long enough.

Now, with the World Cup coming up, Revie has to show us that the teething troubles of his first 18 months were not in vain.

CROY IS EXPERT PENALTY TAKER

CELTIC MIGHT be confident enough to believe that their East German opponents in the Cup Winners Cup Sachsenring Zwickau are of modest proportions only but if they should be unfortunate to concede a penalty to their opponents it could produce an unusual sight.

For the Germans have an expert penalty taker in their ranks in goalkeeper Jurgen Croy the national choice for many years now who managed to score from the spot to ensure that Sachsenring won the East German Cup last year and again in a similar penalty competition in the last round of the Cup Winners Cup against Fiorentina.

EINTRACHT FRANKFURT and Sturm Graz have agreed to alter the dates for their Cup Winners Cup tie. Though drawn at home in the first round, Frankfurt have agreed to play their first leg in Graz on March 2 and hold the return on March 16.

Frankfurt have been far from impressive in the Bundesliga this season and occupied 11th position at the winter break. Not that their Austrian opponents have fared any better in their super-league. Because being seventh of ten clubs is scarcely stunning form.

ANDERLECHT'S RECENT return to form in Belgium which has seen them climb back to the top of the table along with FC Bruges, might spell the end of Wrexham's gallant run in the same competition.

And if Brian Lloyd, the Wrexham goalkeeper, decides to wander to the half-way line during either game it could prove fatal for him. When the RWD Molenbeek goalkeeper did this against Anderlecht in a recent League match, Robby Rensenbrink the Dutch international left-winger of Anderlecht hammered the ball 45 yards over his head and into the net!

WEST HAM UNITED who have been having such a miserable time of it in the League recently, should still have little difficulty in disposing of FC Den Haag.

The Dutch club are just below half-way in the Holland First Division and apart from odd flashes of penetration from strikers Lex Schoenmaker and Van Leeuwen who have 15 goals between them this term, they have rarely impressed up front.

And this still looks like West Ham's best chance of winning anything this season.

LIVERPOOL KNOW all about Dynamo Dresden of course. They even played them in the same UEFA Cup in 1972-73 and beat them 2-0 and 1-0 on that occasion.

However the East Germans who also hauled themselves back as leaders and deposing the top club Lokomotive Leipzig by winning 2-0 there might prove a tougher proposition this time round.

Hans-Jurgen Kreische, their midfield general and top scorer, hit both goals in this match to take his total at the half-way stage of the term to 14.

Dynamo are also top scorers in the League with 37 goals in 13 matches and with the climate of East German football swinging towards more goalscoring — the half-way average was 3.33 goals per match — Liverpool may have a fight on their hands.

And there are good reports currently of two of Dynamo's younger players Weber (19) in defence and Schade (20) in midfield, both of whom have been recently capped at full level.

AC MILAN'S unimpressive form in recent weeks in Italy could see a repeat performance by FC Bruges in the UEFA Cup after the Belgians defeated Roma 1-0 in both legs of the previous round.

WORLD SOCCER DIARY

Bruges have recovered after a spell of indifferent form themselves in the domestic scene though they have been caught by both Anderlecht and RWD Molenbeek in recent weeks at the top of the table.

The worst defeat suffered by Bruges occurred at Liege where they surprisingly lost 4-2.

HAMBURG could be the team of the second half of the season in the Bundesliga. Having finished the first part of the term in third place they resumed with a fine 1-0 win in Gelsenkirchen over Schalke 04.

Like Moenchengladbach, they have conceded only 15 goals in the League this season, thanks in part to the goalkeeping of Rudi Kargus who was capped against Turkey in December and is now considered to be the deputy for Sepp Maier.

Hamburg are also well supported these days with an average of 38,000 being the second best in the country — next to Schalke in fact.

And although Stal Mielec their Polish opponents in the UEFA Cup have World Cup leading scorer Grzegorz Lato in their ranks, they may not be equal to Hamburg's strength.

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YUGOSLAVIA

(Restart 7th March)

	Vojvodina	Hajduk	Sarajevo	Vardar	OFK	Sloboda	Nis	Zeleznicar	Olympia	Borac	Budnocost	Krajugevac	Rijeka	Red Star	Dynamo	Partisan	Velez	Celik
Vojvodina Novi Sad	X	0–0	1–0	2–0				2–0	2–1			2–1	1–1			1–1	2–0	
Hajduk Split		X			4–2	4–0		5–1	2–0			2–0	1–3			0–1	0–0	
FC Sarajevo		0–0	X	3–1	6–0			2–2	2–1			3–2	1–0			3–5	0–0	
Vardar Skopje		2–1		X		1–0		1–0		2–2		1–2		0–1		1–1		0–0
OFK Belgrade	3–1			1–0	X	3–2	0–0			0–3	2–0			2–2	0–2			2–0
Sloboda Tuzla	2–0		1–0			X	1–1			0–1	2–0			0–0	1–1			0–0
Radnicki Nis	1–0	0–0	2–0	0–0			X	0–1			0–0	0–0			0–0	0–2		
Zeleznicar Sarajevo					2–1	2–1		X	0–0	1–1			5–3	1–4			0–1	1–0
Olympia Llubjiana				3–1	2–1	1–1	3–2		X	0–0				2–2	0–0		1–2	1–0
Borac Banja Luka	2–2	1–2	3–1				3–2			X	0–0	2–0		1–2	1–0			
Budnocost Titograd	1–0	1–2	2–0	2–0				1–0	2–3		X	1–0	2–0			1–1		
Radnicki Krajugevac					0–1	1–0		1–0	1–3			X	3–1			1–2	2–2	1–0
FC Rijeka				0–0	0–0	2–1	2–0		1–0	0–0			X	0–1			0–0	2–0
Red Star Belgrade	1–1	0–1	5–1				3–0				4–0	5–0		X	2–0	2–0		
Dynamo Zagreb	1–1	0–1	2–0	1–0				2–0			1–0	2–0	3–0		X	2–1		
Partisan Belgrade					2–0	2–1		0–0	1–0	4–0			2–0			X	2–0	1–1
Velez Mostar				2–0	1–2	4–2	1–1			2–1	3–0			2–0	0–1		X	0–0
Celik Zenica	1–1	0–0	1–0				1–1			2–1	2–0			2–0	2–0			X

BULGARIA

	Academic	Minjor	Botev	Levski	Trakia	Berce	Slavia	Dunau	JSK	Lok Plovdiv	Lok Sofia	Slivin	Plevene	Cernomore	Pirin	CSKA
Academic Sofia	X	1–0	2–0		0–0			1–1		3–0		1–0			1–0	
Minjor Pernik		X	0–0		0–0	4–3		2–0		1–1		2–0			1–0	
Botev Vratza			X			3–0		0–2	1–0	3–0	2–1	2–0	2–1			
Levski Spartak	1–3	1–1	3–0	X	2–0		0–0			1–0	4–2	1–0				
Trakia Plovdiv			2–0		X	1–1		1–0	1–2	2–2		2–0			1–0	
Berce Stara Zagora	0–0			2–3		X	3–1		1–0		1–1		3–0	1–1		1–1
Slavia Sofia	5–4	0–2	4–1		0–0		X		1–1		1–1		4–0		0–0	
Dunau Russe				2–2		2–2	0–0	X	3–0		1–0		4–1	2–2		1–0
JSK Spartak Varna	1–0	4–1		1–1					X		0–1		3–1	1–0		1–2
Lokomotive Plovdiv						0–0	2–2	1–0	2–1	X	1–0		1–0	3–1		2–2
Lokomotive Sofia	2–0	1–0			2–0						X		3–1	1–1		0–2
Slivin						2–0	2–1	3–0	0–1	2–1	2–0	X	1–0			0–0
Plevene	0–0	6–1		3–0	2–3								X	1–1	2–3	0–1
Cernomore	0–1	1–0	3–2		0–0		1–2					1–3		X	1–1	
Pirin Blagoevgrad			2–1	2–3		0–0		2–0	1–0	1–2	3–3	0–0			X	
CSKA Sofia	2–0	3–1	2–3	1–4	1–1		2–1							1–1	1–0	X

EAST GERMANY

	Magdeburg	Riesa	Dresden	Wismut Ave	CZ Jena	Cottbus	Zwickau	Berlin	Vorwarts	Karl Marx Stadt	Halle	Chemie Leipzig	Lok Leipzig	Erfurt
FC Magdeburg	X	5–1	2–2	6–0				2–1	5–2		1–1			3–1
Stahl Riesa		X		1–1		1–0	4–1				1–1	7–1	1–0	
Dynamo Dresden		3–0	X	5–1				5–1	2–0		2–4	5–0		3–1
Wismut Ave				X	0–3	3–1	1–1		2–1	3–0		1–1	1–1	
Carl Ziess Jena	1–1	4–1	1–1		X			3–0		5–0				1–1
Energie Cottbus	2–2		3–4		0–1	X	1–1		2–2	2–3			0–2	
Sachenzring Zwickau	1–0		1–1		2–1		X	0–5		2–2			0–1	
Dynamo Berlin		1–1		1–0		6–1		X	7–1		3–0	1–0		1–1
Vörwarts Frankfurt		2–0			5–1		2–1		X		2–2		0–1	1–7
Karl Marx Stadt	2–2	1–2	0–2					0–3	0–1	X	0–2			2–1
Chemie Halle				1–1	2–1	2–0	2–0				X	4–0	2–3	
Chemie Leipzig	0–1				1–2	1–4	0–0		2–0	1–3		X	2–3	
Lokomotive Leipzig	2–1		0–2		1–1			1–0		2–0			X	3–0
Rot Wiess Erfurt		1–1		5–2		5–0	1–1				1–2	4–1		X

AUSTRIA

(Restart 7th March)

	Voest	Austria	Salzburg	GAK	Admira	Rapid	Sturm	Klagenfurt	Innsbruck	Linz ASK
Voest Linz	X	1–1	2–2	3–0	2–0	0–0	2–1	1–1	0–0	1–1
KF Austria Vienna	3–1	X	5–0	4–0	3–0	1–1	0–0	4–0	3–0	5–0
Austria Salzburg	0–0	1–1	X	0–0	0–1	3–1	2–0	1–1	2–2	1–1
Graz AK	2–1	0–2	4–2	X	0–0	1–0	4–4	0–0	0–0	1–0
Admira Wacker Vienna	4–0	0–0	3–0	3–2	X	0–1	2–1	5–1	1–3	3–1
Rapid Vienna	2–0	1–1	2–1	4–3	2–3	X	1–0	3–0	1–0	4–0
Sturm Durisol Graz	1–2	1–2	3–0	0–0	1–1	0–0	X	1–0	2–1	1–0
Austria Klagenfurt	1–1	2–1	0–3	2–0	1–1	1–0	0–2	X	1–2	1–0
SSW Innsbruck	2–1	2–1	5–2	5–0	*	1–0	3–0	3–1	X	1–1
Linz ASK	1–4	1–1	0–2	3–0	3–0	0–1	2–2	1–1	1–1	X

* to play

USSR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo Kiev ...	30	17	9	4	53	30	43
Shakhter Donetsk	30	15	8	7	45	23	38
Dinamo Moscow	30	13	12	5	39	23	38
Torpedo Moscow	30	13	8	9	42	33	34
Ararat Yerevan ...	30	15	4	11	40	38	34
Karpaty Lvov ...	30	11	10	9	38	28	32
Dnepr Dnepropetr	30	10	11	9	33	30	31
Dinamo Tbiliai ...	30	11	9	10	32	32	31
Zarya Voroshilov	30	10	11	9	32	37	31
Spartak Moscow	30	9	10	11	27	30	28
Lokomotiv Mosc	30	7	12	11	28	33	26
Chernomorets Od	30	8	10	12	27	35	26
Ts SKA Moscow	30	6	13	11	29	38	25
Zenit Leningrad	30	7	10	13	27	42	24
Pakhtakor Tshknt	30	8	7	15	31	44	23
SKA Rostov	30	4	8	18	23	50	16

USSR

	Dinamo Kiev	Ararat Yerevan	Pakhtakor Tash	Zenit Leningrad	Chernom Odessa	Spartak Moscow	Dinamo Tbilisi	Lok Moscow	Zarya Voroshilov	Ts SKA Moscow	Shakhter Donetsk	Torpedo Moscow	Karpaty Lvov	Dinamo Moscow	Dnepr Dnepropr	SKA Rostov
Dinamo Kiev	X	4–0	0–1	3–2	1–0	3–1	3–1	3–2	3–0	3–0	3–1	3–0	2–2	1–0	1–0	2–0
Ararat Yerevan	2–3	X	2–0	4–2	1–0	2–1	1–0	2–0	2–0	2–1	1–0	2–0	1–0	3–5	3–0	2–2
Pakhtakor Tashkent	5–0	1–0	X	3–0	2–1	0–0	0–1	2–2	1–2	1–3	0–2	2–1	1–1	0–2	1–0	4–2
Zenit Leningrad	1–1	1–2	1–0	X	3–1	0–2	2–0	0–1	0–0	1–1	0–1	0–0	3–2	1–1	0–0	2–1
Chernomorets Odessa	1–0	1–1	1–1	1–2	X	0–0	2–1	1–0	1–0	0–0	2–1	0–0	2–2	1–1	2–0	1–1
Spartak Moscow	0–1	0–0	2–0	2–2	3–1	X	2–0	4–2	0–0	2–1	1–1	0–4	2–1	1–2	1–0	0–0
Dinamo Tbilisi	1–1	2–1	0–0	0–1	1–0	1–0	X	0–0	2–3	1–0	3–1	2–0	1–0	1–1	2–0	1–1
Lokomotiv Moscow	1–1	4–1	4–1	1–0	2–2	0–0	1–1	X	0–1	1–1	0–0	0–1	1–0	0–1	1–1	1–0
Zarya Voroshilovgrad	1–1	0–1	1–1	3–0	3–1	1–0	2–2	1–1	X	1–0	1–1	1–2	1–1	0–6	2–0	3–1
Ts SKA Moscow	1–1	0–1	2–1	1–0	0–0	1–3	0–0	1–0	4–0	X	1–0	1–1	2–2	1–1	3–3	1–1
Shakhter Donetsk	0–1	3–0	1–0	5–0	1–0	1–0	3–1	2–0	2–2	2–0	X	4–2	2–0	1–0	2–2	4–0
Torpedo Moscow	2–2	1–1	4–1	2–0	0–1	3–0	1–0	2–0	2–1	3–2	0–0	X	2–1	1–1	2–1	1–2
Karpaty Lvov	2–2	2–0	2–0	1–0	3–1	2–0	3–2	0–0	0–0	2–0	0–0	1–0	X	0–1	1–0	3–0
Dinamo Moscow	2–1	1–0	3–0	1–1	1–0	0–0	2–3	2–2	0–0	1–1	1–0	1–1	1–0	X	0–0	1–0
Dnepr Dnepropetrovsk	1–1	1–0	1–1	1–1	4–1	1–0	0–0	2–0	2–1	2–0	1–1	2–1	1–1	2–0	X	3–0
SKA Rostov	0–2	3–2	3–1	1–1	0–1	0–0	1–2	0–1	0–1	0–0	1–3	1–3	0–1	1–0	1–2	X

ARGENTINA: National Championships (final group standings — top two of each group enter final round)

SECTION A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Riv. Plate	16	12	1	3	41	17	25
Estudiantes	16	7	7	2	24	18	21
Huracan	16	9	1	6	31	21	19
Gimnasia (M)	16	7	5	4	22	16	19
All Boys	16	5	3	8	21	30	13
S. Martin (T)	16	4	4	8	23	31	12
V. Sarfield	16	3	4	9	20	30	10
Cipolletti	16	2	4	10	19	32	8

SECTION B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
At. Tucuman	16	10	3	3	39	22	23
San Lorenzo	16	10	2	4	34	22	22
Argentinos Jrs	16	9	2	5	35	35	20
Boca Juniors	16	8	0	7	39	31	16
Aldosivi	16	6	2	8	23	29	14
J. Alianza (SJ)	16	6	0	10	24	39	12
Gimnasia (LP)	16	4	3	9	27	31	11
FC Oeste	16	4	3	9	21	26	11

SECTION C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosario C	16	10	5	1	21	8	25
Gimnasia (J)	16	8	5	3	18	21	21
Independiente	16	6	7	3	30	20	19
Belgrano	16	7	3	6	26	23	17
Union (S.Fe)	16	5	6	5	23	19	16
Chacarita	16	3	4	9	16	33	10
Banfield	16	3	3	10	20	30	9
Newbery	16	3	3	10	14	24	9

SECTION D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Talleres	16	9	4	3	38	23	22
Temperley	16	9	4	3	31	21	22
Colon (S.Fe)	16	7	3	4	34	27	21
Newell's	16	9	3	4	31	15	21
Racing	16	7	3	6	36	30	17
Atlanta	16	7	1	8	39	35	15
J. Antoniana	16	2	7	7	17	24	11
B. Mitre	16	0	1	15	11	52	1

Final round (two matches to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Estudiantes LP	5	4	1	0	6	1	9
River Plate	5	3	2	0	10	7	8
San Lorenzo	5	1	3	1	12	9	5
Gimnasia Jujuy	5	2	1	2	9	9	5
Rosario Central	5	1	2	2	7	7	4
At. Tucuman	5	1	2	2	5	8	4
Temperley	5	1	1	3	7	10	3
Talleres Cordoba	5	0	2	3	3	8	2

URUGUAY: Major League final round (one match to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	17	11	5	1	33	15	27
Liverpool	17	10	3	4	29	20	23
Peñarol	17	9	4	4	29	19	22
Danubio	17	7	6	4	21	14	20
River Plate	17	6	7	4	34	29	19
Defensor	17	4	8	5	26	22	16
Fenix	17	5	4	8	22	30	14
Huracan Buceo	17	6	2	9	19	28	14

CHILE: First Division (five matches to go)

1) Union Española 44 pts, 2) Concepcion 42, 3) Huachipato 38, 4) Green Cross 37, 5) Palestino, Lota Schwager, Colo Colo 33, 8) Universidad de Chile, Santiago Morning 27, 10) Wanderers 26, 11) Naval, Everton, Antofagasta 25, 14) La Serena 24, 15) Rangers 22, 16) Aviacion 21, 17) Magallanes 20, 18) O'Higgins 19.

VENEZUELA: Professional League final round (two matches to go)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep. Galicia	3	3	0	0	3	0	6
Portuguesa	3	1	1	1	5	2	3
Estudiantes	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Portugues	3	0	1	2	0	5	1

COLOMBIA: Championship playoff

1) Millionarios, Deportivo Cali 6 pts, 3) Independiente Santa Fe 5, 4) Bucaramanga 3, 5) Medellin, Junior 2.

MORE TABLES ON PAGE 50

●*Continued from page 17*

TURKEY

H	Romania	D	1-1
A	Russia	L	0-3
A	Switzerland	D	1-1
A	Romania	D	2-2
A	Eire	L	0-4
H	Russia	W	1-0
H	West Germany	L	0-5

P7 1-3-3 goals 5-16

WALES

A	Hungary	W	2-1
A	Luxembourg	W	3-1
H	Scotland	D	2-2
A	England	D	2-2
A	Northern Ireland	L	0-1
H	Austria	W	1-0

P6 3-2-1 goals 10-7

YUGOSLAVIA

A	Northern Ireland	L	0-1
H	Holland	W	3-0
A	Sweden	W	2-1
A	Norway	W	3-1
H	Sweden	W	3-0
H	Northern Ireland	W	1-0

P6 5-0-1 goals 12-3

At least Johnny Rep is at last hitting form. The Dutchman's troubles have been recorded here before, so it' a pleasure to be able to report his fine all-round performance against Bercelona in which he also scored twice to secure a 3-2 win.

"I've sorted out my problems, I've started to get along with my team-mates and they with me", he said candidly. "I've also started to identify with the club and enjoy my game again."

Rep also had a goal disallowed against CFB at the start of a final half-hour which saw Valencia's Cervero and CFB's Mir sent off for fighting and later brought Costas his suspension — for attacking a Press photographer.

Even more startling was the decision after the match by referee Luis Maria Juango, that he was going straight into retirement!

He'd become disillusioned about soccer and this match had been the last straw.

● continued from page 20

He said: "I don't understand how two teams who for an hour can play some sensational football, can then make such exhibitions of themselves, with all that rough play, all the theatricals, and so on. There's no way anyone will make me change my mind."

Heading for oblivion of a different sort are Oviedo and Gijon, already starting to lose touch at the bottom of the table, particularly since Zaragoza started to climb. San Sebastian target Carlos Diarte hit a hat-trick against Salamanca and then inspired a worthy 0-0 draw in Bilbao.

He shouldn't have much to worry about where his nationality is concerned. The FA are now proposing a change in the rules so that clubs may only sign two players not qualified to play for the national team. Semi-foreigners already here can continue as "Spaniards" until 1980.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fenerbahce	15	7	7	1	23	9	21
Trabzonspor	15	8	4	3	19	11	20
Altay Izmir	15	6	7	2	19	12	19
Galatasaray	15	5	8	2	17	10	18
Boluspor	15	6	5	4	21	14	17
Adanaspor	15	6	5	4	18	17	17
Bursaspor	15	6	4	5	17	16	16
Giresunspor	15	4	7	4	16	15	15
Orduspor	15	4	6	5	9	14	14
Balikesirspor	15	5	4	6	7	14	14
Eskisehirspor	15	3	7	5	16	19	13
Adanademirspor	15	5	3	7	11	15	13
Göztepe Izmir	15	3	5	7	16	18	11
Zonguldakspor	15	2	7	6	9	13	11
Besiktas	15	3	5	7	15	21	11
Ankaragücü	15	4	2	9	16	31	10

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Benfica	16	12	3	1	48	12	27
Boavista Porto	16	11	4	1	38	14	26
Sporting	16	11	3	2	31	8	25
Belenenses	16	10	3	3	27	15	23
Porto	16	7	5	4	40	19	19
Vit. Guimaraes	16	7	5	4	30	16	19
Estoril Praia	16	6	4	6	19	24	16
Atletico	16	7	1	8	17	29	15
Braga	16	4	6	6	17	22	14
Leixoes	16	5	3	8	22	40	13
Vit. Setubal	16	3	5	8	15	22	11
CUF Barreiro	16	3	5	8	7	28	11
Farense	16	4	2	10	21	33	10
Tomar	16	3	4	9	17	37	10
Beira-Mar	16	2	5	9	10	25	9
Academico	16	2	4	10	12	27	8

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AEK Athens	12	8	4	0	24	7	20
PAOK Saloniki	17	7	3	1	21	4	17
Iannina	12	7	3	2	16	10	17
Panathinaikos	12	7	3	2	26	15	16
Ethnikos	12	5	5	2	19	10	15
Olympiakos	12	5	5	2	18	14	15
Aris Saloniki	11	4	4	3	13	9	12
Iraklis	12	4	3	5	9	12	11
Pierikos	12	2	6	4	7	9	10
Atromitos Athen*	12	3	6	3	8	11	9
Panachaiki	12	2	5	5	9	16	9
Apollen Athen	11	1	6	4	8	15	8
Kastoria	12	1	6	5	12	24	8
Panseraikos	12	1	5	6	8	17	7
Panaitolikos	9	1	3	5	5	12	2
Panionios	12	1	2	9	6	25	4

* Three points deducted

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	21	12	4	5	36	19	28
Celtic	21	12	4	5	43	26	28
Hibernian	20	10	6	4	34	23	26
Motherwell	21	9	7	5	36	29	25
Aberdeen	21	8	6	7	32	29	22
Hearts	21	7	7	7	24	29	21
Dundee	21	7	6	8	36	40	20
Ayr United	21	7	4	10	26	36	18
Dundee United	20	4	6	10	24	32	14
St Johnstone	21	2	2	17	20	48	6

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Bruges	19	11	4	4	38	20	26
RWD Molenbeek	19	11	4	4	36	19	26
Anderlecht	19	11	4	4	38	24	26
Lierse SK	19	10	3	6	37	24	23
Beveren-Waas	19	8	7	4	23	10	23
SV Waregem	19	8	7	4	31	19	23
Lokeren	18	10	2	6	35	21	22
Beerschot	19	8	6	5	32	31	22
Standard	19	8	5	6	24	22	21
Antwerp	19	8	5	6	23	27	21
CS Bruges	16	6	9	4	28	23	21
Liege	18	7	5	6	32	33	19
AS Ostende	19	3	8	8	20	29	14
Beringen	19	5	3	11	14	33	13
FC Mechelen	19	3	7	9	23	32	13
La Louvière	19	2	9	8	16	29	13
SC Charleroi	19	3	5	11	19	31	11
Berchem Sport	19	2	7	10	12	31	11
Racing Mechelen	18	4	2	12	10	33	10

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Manchester U	25	15	5	5	40	23	35
Leeds	24	15	4	5	44	22	34
Liverpool	25	12	10	3	40	23	34
Derby	25	13	6	6	39	33	32
Queen's PR	25	10	10	5	32	20	30
West Ham	24	12	5	7	36	31	29
Middlesbrough	25	10	8	7	26	21	28
Manchester City	25	9	9	7	38	34	27
Ipswich	25	8	11	6	30	26	27
Stoke	25	10	7	8	31	30	27
Everton	25	9	9	7	41	46	27
Newcastle	25	10	5	10	45	33	25
Aston Villa	25	8	8	9	31	34	24
Coventry	25	8	8	9	27	34	24
Tottenham	25	6	11	8	35	41	23
Leicester	25	5	13	7	27	36	23
Norwich	25	8	6	11	36	40	22
Arsenal	25	7	7	11	29	31	21
Birmingham	25	7	4	14	35	49	18
Wolverhampton	25	5	6	14	25	38	16
Burnley	25	4	7	14	24	40	15
Sheffield United	25	1	5	19	18	54	7

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	12	9	2	1	23	11	20
Torino	12	8	3	1	18	7	19
Milan	12	6	3	3	15	7	15
Cesena	12	4	7	1	16	11	15
Napoli	12	6	3	3	18	13	15
Bologna	12	4	7	1	13	10	15
Inter	11	5	2	4	13	11	12
Perugia	12	4	4	4	10	11	12
Roma	12	3	5	4	8	10	11
Sampdoria	11	3	3	5	6	10	9
Fiorentina	12	3	3	6	11	13	9
Lazio	12	2	5	5	13	16	9
Verona	12	4	1	7	13	20	9
Ascoli	12	2	5	5	5	15	9
Como	12	1	4	7	7	14	6
Cagliari	12	1	3	8	7	17	5

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Madrid	17	11	3	3	33	18	25
Real Madrid	17	9	6	2	29	13	24
Barcelona	17	9	4	4	39	23	22
Hercules Alicante	17	8	5	4	21	19	21
Español Barcelona	17	10	0	7	25	27	20
Athletic Bilbao	17	6	7	4	25	20	19
Sevilla	17	7	4	6	21	21	18
Salamanca	17	6	6	5	16	18	18
Real Betis Sevilla	17	7	4	6	17	21	18
Granada	16	6	5	5	19	25	17
Racing Santander	17	7	3	7	23	25	17
Valencia	17	7	2	8	23	23	16
Real Sociedad	17	4	6	7	16	23	14
Elche	17	3	7	7	19	22	13
Real Zaragoza	16	4	4	8	23	26	12
Las Palmas	17	5	2	10	21	29	12
Sporting Gijon	17	2	5	10	19	27	9
Oviedo	17	3	3	11	15	24	9

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	16	12	3	1	42	17	27
PSV Eindhoven	17	11	3	3	51	18	25
Feyenoord	17	11	3	3	39	22	25
Twente Enschede	16	10	3	3	31	13	23
NEC Nijmegen	17	6	9	2	26	21	21
AZ'67 Alkmaar	16	7	5	4	25	19	19
Roda JC	16	7	4	5	24	21	18
Sparta Rotterdam	17	4	10	3	20	20	18
Den Haag	17	7	3	7	31	26	17
Telstar Velsen	17	5	6	6	30	27	16
Amsterdam	17	5	4	8	22	27	14
MVV Maastricht	17	5	4	8	20	32	14
EVV Eindhoven	17	4	5	8	19	32	13
NAC Breda	17	3	6	8	11	26	12
De Graafschap	17	3	6	8	24	41	12
GAE Deventer	16	1	7	8	18	33	9
Excelsior	17	3	3	11	10	29	9
Utrecht	16	2	4	10	20	39	8

SHOP WINDOW

WANTED: Liverpool FC programmes Jan. 1961—May 1967, also 1950 Cup SF and UEFA Final 2nd leg 1973. Cash or rare old programmes offered. SAE for list. Soccer and Boxing cine films also required. G. Williams, 50 Coronation Drive, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2DD.

WANTED: January 1975 issue of WORLD SOCCER to complete set. David Bright, 55 Stackfield, Harlow, Essex.

MANCHESTER UTD. programmes required. I will pay 25p minimum for each one needed. I also have 800 assorted programmes available for exchange. Also required are pre 1954 FA Cup Finals and pre 1967 League Cup Finals. Write first to: Steve Gilhespy, 13 Bare Avenue, Morecambe, Lancs, LA4 6BD.

WANTED: Will pay cash for old sets of football cards (including sweet cigarette cards), also for any football annuals in good condition pre 1968. Write first with details to: Henderson, 2 Clarkston Drive, Airdrie, Lanarkshire, Scotland.

FOOTBALL CLUB LAPEL BADGES — will exchange with collectors anywhere in the world. 93 Lipscombe Rise, Alton, Hampshire, GU34.

WANTED: Any and all Celtic handbooks, programmes — home and away, Friendly, Cup or League matches. 4 St. Andrews Road, Ardrossan, Ayrshire, Scotland.

CRYSTAL PALACE PROGRAMMES urgently required (home and away) including games played abroad, also reserve and youth programmes, handbooks, press cuttings, photographs and pinnace photos. Pre-war programmes and handbooks are required to complete sets for each season. Top prices paid. Ian Weller, 18 Oaks Road, Shirley, Croydon, CRO 5HL. Tel: (01) 654 6210.

I AM 30 YEARS OF AGE and would like to correspond with anyone who is interested in international football, preferably from Brazil, Holland, England or Poland. Eric Johansson, Varisselankatu 39 B 26, 65200 Vasa 20, Finland.

"IL CALCIO ILLUSTRATO" — 15 volumes (complete seasons) mostly hand bound — 1949-1966, two volumes of which consists of all international matches of that period. Also about 4 years collection of monthly "HURRA JUVENTUS" club official magazines. Offers, please phone in the first instance 01-568 0311.

POLISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION MEMBER wishes to exchange football badges from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Eire with ones from Poland, Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia. Janusz Kukulski M.D. Floriansha 29, 31-019 Krakow, Poland.

WANTED: ROTHMANS FOOTBALL YEARBOOKS 1 & 2, Scottish football book No. 19, Shoot Annuals 71 & 72. Handbooks, souvenirs and publications and papers concerning Liverpool and Aston Villa. Must be in good condition. Excellent prices paid. Brian Duncan, 23 Allan Street, Aberdeen, AB1 6HN.

WANTED: World Soccer issues. June, July, August and September 1968. January and July 1969, July 1970, June 1972, July 1973, January, June and July 1974, June and July 1975. David Ashman, 51 Silverdale Avenue, Coton, Cambridge.

WANTED: IL LIBRO TRICOLORE DEL CALIO ITALIANO 1898-1974 published in Milan, October 1974. C Cummins, 20 Woodford House, Woodford Road, Snaresbrook, London, E18 2ES. Tel: 01-989 1590 (after 6.30).

HOLZENBEIN West Germany

World SOCCER

MASNY Czechoslovakia